

Future Trends Report

Based on Analysis of the Future Scene in Mid-Term and Final Evaluation

STEP 1. Identify Challenges

Read the Future Scene carefully and generate ideas for challenges, concerns, and possible related problems. Choose the 5 most important challenges and write them in the space provided. Include applicable research with appropriate in-text citations.

Challenge 1 : Safety Concern

Based on our survey with 200 participants, distrust and scam are the main reasons for them not using dating apps. About 36% of participants (> 40 age group) and 31% of participants (< 40 age group) indicate that trust is the main reason for not using dating apps. About 20% of participants feel that fear of scams deter them from using dating apps.

According to our interview with Ms June Lim, Corporate Manager of Gai Gai, safety concern is one of the main reasons why some singles in Singapore prefer SDN accredited agencies to dating apps in finding their partners. Unlike SDN accredited agencies who will review the individual profiles during registration process, online dating users can pretend to be someone else and create false profiles for romance scam and financial scam.

With AI algorithm working behind the scene, dating apps will find the best potential matches curated for the users. What the users need to do is to choose their desired partners based on the photos and profiles shown in the apps and start chatting online or physical dating. Safety concerns is a key challenge for online dating because users who are genuinely using dating app to find partner may not be aware of the true identity and intentions of scammers with fake profiles. This may pose a threat to ladies who meet their 'partners' for the first time at private places.

Research:

1. According to Psychology Today, people with ill intentions may match innocent users to get them to fall into their trap.

Birch, J. (2018, June 27). Are Dating Apps Creating Too Many Problems? Psychology Today. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/sg/blog/navigating-the-love-gap/201806/are-dating-apps-creating-too-many-problems>

2. According to Psychology Today, it is relatively common for users to create profiles with false information.

Anderson, R. (2016, September 6). The Ugly Truth About Online Dating. Psychology Today. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/sg/blog/the-mating-game/201609/the-ugly-truth-about-online-dating>

3. According to Psychology Today, there is a high tendency of people lying on dating apps, misleading users, and sometimes causing them to make the wrong decisions.

Seidman, G. (2014, December 7). 4 Myths About Online Dating, Exposed. Psychology Today. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/close-encounters/201412/4-myths-about-online-dating-exposed>

4. According to CNA, a 47-year-old man swindled a woman of some S\$68,000 by pretending to be a silver trader with a fake name on Tinder.

Choo, C. (2019, July 19). The big read: Fast love – dating apps help busy Singaporeans find almost instant romance. CNA. Retrieved July 18, 2020, from <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/fast-love-dating-apps-help-busy-singapore-big-read-11466772>

5. According to Verywell Family, there are plenty of predators on dating apps like Tinder that prey on teenagers, and profiles also often reveal users' exact location.

Morin, A. (2020, June 10). Is it safe for teens to use Tinder? Verywell Family. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from <https://www.verywellfamily.com/what-every-parent-needs-to-know-about-tinder-2609052>

6. According to The Straits Times, a woman was molested at Jurong Bird Park by her partner on their first Coffee Meets bagel physical meet.

WONG, C. (2020). Accountant jailed for molesting woman at Jurong Bird Park on their first Coffee Meets Bagel date. The Straits Times. Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/courts-crime/accountant-jailed-for-molesting-woman-at-jurong-bird-park-on-their-first-date>.

7. A study by Independent, UK revealed online daters' dishonesty in their dating profiles to make victims fall into their love scams. The swindlers typically befriend the victim online and ask for money for various reasons. They disappear once the money has been transferred. This is the act of catfish dating. One example can be seen in UK where 10% of online dating profiles are fake, and \$143 million was lost.

Never swipe right on these people. The Independent. (2020). Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/love-sex/online-dating-fraud-how-to-identify-most-likely-scammer-profiles-scams-a7553616.html>.

8. According to The Straits Times, the number of Internet love scams in Singapore increased in the first three months of 2020. There were 175 cases recorded between Jan 1 and March 31, up 33.6 per cent from 131 in the same period in 2019.

CHONG, C. (2020). Internet love scams have increased in the first three months this year compared to 2019. The Straits Times. Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/internet-love-scams-have-increased-in-the-first-three-months-this-year-compared-to-2019>.

9. According to the 2019 annual report by Singapore Police Force, scams make up the majority of crimes in Singapore with a 118% increase in credit-for-sex scams and 6% increase in internet love scams. Internet sex scams and credit-for-sex scams are the top five most common scams in Singapore.

Crime up 7% in first half of 2019, mainly due to rise in scam cases: Police. CNA. (2020). Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/crime-up-first-half-of-2019-rise-in-scam-cases-11856622>.

Challenge 2: Privacy Intrusion

Based on our survey with 200 participants, intrusion of privacy is one of the key concerns for them not using dating apps. About 21% of participants (> 40 age group) and 10% of participants (< 40 age group) indicated that intrusion of privacy is one of the main reasons for them not using dating apps. From the survey, it is observed that older participants (> 40 age group) think that personal information does matter to them more than the younger participants (< 40 age group).

Similar to other online apps, intrusion of privacy is a key concern for users of online dating apps. In registering with dating apps, users have to create a narrative profile, key in personal preferences and criteria in choosing partners and upload photos. Most of the information in the profiles are very personal and should be kept as strictly confidential. However, according to research, some popular dating apps share users' personal data with third parties for advertising, marketing and other purposes without users' knowledge. Moreover, due to insufficient encryption of data, dating apps are vulnerable to stalkers, black mailers and hackers. These leaked personal data may lead to ransom and financial losses.

Research:

1. According to Consumer's Reports, Tinder does not use a secure HTTPS, which allows others to see what photos you have viewed and the photos

Fowler, B. (2018, January 23). Flaws in Tinder app put users' privacy at risk, researchers say. Consumer Reports. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from

<https://www.consumerreports.org/privacy/tinder-app-security-flaws-put-users-privacy-at-risk/>

2. According to Showbiz Cheat Sheet, there are 7 online dating sites, which includes Tinder and Grindr, that may be invading users' privacy

Bolluyt, J. (2016, May 24). Online dating? 7 sites that may be invading your privacy. Showbiz Cheat Sheet. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from <https://www.cheatsheet.com/gear-style/online-dating-7-sites-that-may-be-invading-your-privacy.html/>

3. According to We Live Security, some online dating apps, like Tinder, OkCupid and Grindr, share detailed personal data on their users with third parties for advertising purposes, including location, age, gender, as well as, in some cases, sexual orientation, drug use, and religious and political views.

Owaida, A. (2020, January 22). Dating apps share personal data with advertisers, study says. WeLiveSecurity. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from <https://www.welivesecurity.com/2020/01/22/dating-apps-share-intimate-data-advertisers-study/>

4. According to Forbes, online dating apps such as Tinder, OkCupid and Grindr, share detailed personal data on their users with third parties for advertising purposes, which is in violation of the European Union's General Data Privacy Regulation (GDPR) rules, some of the strongest such laws ever enacted.

Burns, J. (2020, January 17). Data-sharing by Twitter, Grindr, Tinder and others 'Out of control,' Norwegian council says. Forbes. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/janetwburns/2020/01/14/data-sharing-grindr-twitter-tinder-other-apps-is-out-of-control-violates-gdpr-report-says/#7d61b57656e4>

5. According to study by FORBRUKERRADET, in this day and age, there are little things stopping data sharing and the situation is out of control.

ForBrukerRadet. (2020, January 14). Out Of Control. How consumers are exploited by the online advertising industry. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from <https://fil.forbrukerradet.no/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2020-01-14-out-of-control-final-version.pdf>

6. A study released by the Norwegian Consumer Council in Jan 2020 discovers that several popular dating apps like Tinder, OkCupid and Grindr share users' detailed personal data with third parties for advertising and marketing purposes.

Grindr and OkCupid Spread Personal Details, Study Says. Nytimes.com. (2020). Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/13/technology/grindr-apps-dating-data-tracking.html>

7. Based on a research in Oct 2017 by Kaspersky Lab, a Moscow-based cybersecurity firm, it uncovers security flaws in popular dating apps like Tinder, OkCupid, Bumble and Paktor, which make users' personal information potentially accessible to stalkers, black mailers, and hackers. These security lapses could expose people's names, login information, location, message history, and other account activity.

Dangerous Liaisons: is everyone doing it online? Kaspersky.com. (2020). Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://www.kaspersky.com/blog/online-dating-report/>.

8. A study conducted by NowSecure in 2019 analyzed the cybersecurity risk level of 50 publicly available dating mobile apps available in the Apple® App Store® and Google Play™. 18% of the Android and iOS apps have medium to high risk vulnerabilities such as leaking of sensitive and personal data, unencrypted data transmission, and use of known vulnerable third-party libraries. Only 55% of the mobile apps evaluated carry very low or no risk. Those results are concerning given the prevalence of mobile dating.

Reed, B. (2020). *Mobile Dating Apps Threaten Users' Privacy - NowSecure*. Nowsecure.com. Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://www.nowsecure.com/blog/2019/02/13/mobile-dating-apps-threaten-users-privacy/>

Challenge 3: Loss of Individuality

According to our survey with 200 participants, about 36% of the participants disagree that powerful AI algorithm is more accurate in analysing human personality than inner self and only 30% of them disagreed that if this trend of online dating usage continues, future generations will rely on AI algorithm in finding their partners. The rest of the participants' responds are either 'agree' or 'not sure'. From the survey result, it could infer that humans are aware of the capacity of AI algorithm in analysing our personality and the potential of AI curating our life and changing our ability to make decisions. As the process takes place subtly, human are not sure the extent of AI curating our life

Online apps, powered by AI, affect every aspects of human life. They affect the way we work, communicate, shop, socialise etc. The pervasive use of these apps has slowly curated human life and lead to an over reliance on these apps without our knowledge.

Due to the convenience of online dating apps, there is an increasing trend of human dating online instead of physical dating. Online dating apps makes use of AI algorithms to analyse users' profiles, needs and preferences and pair them up with "suitable partners". By using dating apps, users are leaving the decision of choosing a partner to AI algorithms. All the user needs to do is to choose their desired partners based on the photos and profiles curated by AI algorithms for him/her and start chatting online or dating physically.

However, prolonged usage of online dating apps may result in an overreliance on dating apps to choose our partners. This will ultimately lead to a loss of individuality as humans no longer have freewill to choose their life partners for themselves.

Research:

1. According to the Washington Post companies such as Apple, have been in a race to become our 'personal assistant', for us to be reliant and dependent on them, while they collect data about us.

Foer, F. (2017, September 8). How Silicon Valley is erasing your individuality. The Washington Post. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from <http://pumpedup.social.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/2014/12/18/an-analysis-of-social-media-and-loss-of-individualism/>

2. According to an analysis by The Literary Blues, social media has infiltrated our lives, influencing us.

Naraine, T. (2014, December 18). An analysis of social media and loss of individualism. The Literary Blues. A blog by Tristan Naraine. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from <https://pumpedup.social.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/2014/12/18/an-analysis-of-social-media-and-loss-of-individualism/>

3. According to Rippinit, we are losing our individuality, and it encourages creativity and disregard for boundaries.

Abubakar, A. S. (n.d.). Promoting individuality. Rippinit. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from <https://rippinit.net/blog/promoting-individuality/>

4. According to Financial Times, the rise of big data and AI algorithms are slowly causing humans to lose their freewill.

Yuval Noah Harari on big data, Google and the end of free will. Ft.com. (2020). Retrieved 18 August 2020, from <https://www.ft.com/content/50bb4830-6a4c-11e6-ae5b-a7cc5dd5a28c>

5. According to the book *World Without Mind*, tech giants like Google, Apple and Microsoft have changed the way we work and live as they affect the decisions we make. In the online dating context, prolonged usage of online dating apps may too result in an over reliance on dating apps to choose our partners. This will ultimately lead to a loss of individuality as humans no longer have freewill to choose their life partners for themselves.

[FOER, F. \(2020\). WORLD WITHOUT MIND. WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON.](#)

Challenge 4: Paradox of Choice

Based on our interview with Ms June Lim, many online daters do face difficulty in choosing their partners on online dating platforms as they are overwhelmed with options, leading to an objectification mindset and decreased desire to commit to a single partner. This mentality may cause daters to continue browsing dating sites while already in a relationship.

Given the abundance of choices, the daters typically end up less satisfied with their final decision than if they'd been given fewer options in the first place. Therefore, choice overload can lead daters frustrated with the decision process, dissatisfied with the outcome, and disappointed with themselves.

Research

1. According to Psychology Today, one of the problems dating apps create is the paradox of choice. Researchers found that daters who chose from a small pool of options were more satisfied with their match than those who chose from a large pool; those who chose from a larger pool were more likely to “reverse their choice” and opt for a new match instead.

Are dating apps creating too many problems? (2018, 27). Psychology Today. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/sg/blog/navigating-the-love-gap/201806/are-dating-apps-creating-too-many-problems>

2. According to the Straits Times, the author faced the paradox of choice when trying to find a partner, ending having the anxiety of never finding someone.

LEE, J. (2019, April 21). Dating apps: Paradox of choice or the way to meet Mr Right? The Straits Times. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from: <https://www.straitstimes.com/lifestyle/dating-apps-illusion-of-choice-or-the-way-to-meet-mr-right>

3. According to INSIDER, when using online dating apps, we face the paradox of choice, where we keep thinking there is someone out there, and thus carelessly swipe through people's dating profiles.

Dodgson, L. (2018, August 16). Dating apps give us too much choice, and it's ruining our chances for finding love. Insider. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from <https://www.insider.com/dating-apps-are-destroying-love-2018-8>

4. According to CNA, when presented with seemingly endless possibilities, the irony is that users then find it harder to commit to a person at any one time, as they think about whether or not there is someone better out there.

The big read: Fast love – dating apps help busy Singaporeans find almost instant romance. (2019, July 19). CNA. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/fast-love-dating-apps-help-busy-singapore-big-read-11466772>

5. According to Today, most singles do not have opportunities to date physically due to their busy work schedules and end up dating online and finding themselves constantly swiping dating profiles one by one in hopes of finding better partners.

Low, Y. J. (2019, October 9). Singapore singles need more opportunities, time and energy to date and meet new people: Survey. TODAY Online. Retrieved July 18, 2020, from <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/singles-need-more-opportunities-time-and-energy-date-and-meet-new-people-survey>

Challenge 5: Mental Health Issues

Frequent and regular rejection with online dating can lead to negative psychological well-being, resulting in low self-esteem and distress. The more rejections the dater receives, the more deflated and exhausted he or she becomes and this makes a person feel fatigue and hopeless.

These negative experiences from dishonesty and ghosting can lead daters to question their physical appearance, self-worth, conversational skills and the general reliability of the opposite sex.

Research

1. According to Psychology Today, regular rejection and deceit can be bad for our mental health, lowering our self-esteem, self-doubt, less trust and more negative emotions.

Are dating apps damaging our mental health? (2018, October 18). Psychology Today. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/sg/blog/talking-about-men/201810/are-dating-apps-damaging-our-mental-health>

2. According to SAGE journals, a rejection mindset occurs when there are virtually unlimited choices, leading users to be more pessimistic and rejecting.

A rejection mind-set: Choice overload in online dating - Tila M. Pronk, Jaap J. A. Denissen, 2020. (2019, August 21). SAGE Journals. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1948550619866189>

3. According to Psychology Today, a few problems of online dating are rejection and that people online cannot be trusted, leading to feelings of hopelessness and soul-sucking.

Are dating apps creating too many problems? (2018, 27). Psychology Today. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/sg/blog/navigating-the-love-gap/201806/are-dating-apps-creating-too-many-problems>

4. According to Medium, online dating has some issues, including trust and comparing we to others, this causes people to feel let down and have a lower self-esteem.

Youra, S. (2020, February 8). Is online dating bad for our mental health? Medium. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from: <https://medium.com/the-partnered-pen/is-online-dating-bad-for-our-mental-health-2610b9e3e6a7>

5. According to The Wenatchee World, a woman who was ghosted online by her 'partner' was so badly affected to the point she was ashamed to admit that she had been victimised online. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from:

https://www.wenatcheeworld.com/community/dear-abby-woman-ashamed-to-admit-she-was-victimized-online/article_d2376092-de88-11ea-8374-b3a78bf708c4.html

STEP 2. Select the Underlying Problem

Using the challenges listed in Step 1, identify a problem of major importance to the Future Scene situation. Write your Underlying Problem making sure your question clearly explains the action that will be taken and the desired results/goal of that action.

Incorporating Challenge(s) #3

Underlying Problem:

Given the rising trend of individuals' usage of online dating and reliance on Artificial Intelligence to make simple decisions like dating, which may result in a loss of individuality, how might we mitigate the loss of individuality so that people still have the freewill to make key decisions in their lives in the years 2030 and beyond in Singapore?

STEP 3. Produce Solution Ideas

Generate solution ideas to the Underlying Problem in Step 2. Choose the 5 most effective solutions and write the elaborated ideas in the space provided. Include applicable research with appropriate in-text citations.

Solution 1: Holistic Education

We, The Dating Lab, shall work with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to implement a holistic education framework with increased emphasis on non-academic knowledge, cognitive, social & emotional proficiency and digital literacy.

Holistic education shall resolve the underlying problem by:

- providing more non-academic electives. By doing so, students are able to explore new interests instead of indulging in social media. These elective programs are mandatory but not graded, hence students will not have exam pressure. MOE or schools can work with other companies for sponsorships to inculcate knowledge in their specialised fields.
- participating in project works so that students will be exposed to team works, innovation and problem-solving skills, which are essential to prevent students from being curated by technology and losing their individuality. Social interaction skills and relationship management technique learnt by participating in role play and workshops will ensure students are more comfortable in physical interaction. Some of these workshops can be conducted with students from other classes to increase their exposure to “unfamiliar people” and students can learn to work with people with diverse background.

- attending digital literacy program to equip the student with up to date knowledge of AI application. More importantly, through case studies, this program will educate student on the limitation, social and ethical issues related to AI and social media. MOE can also collaborate with Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA) to engage speakers to give talks in school on online scams, sex scams and raise awareness about the dangers of online dating.

With more emphasis to cultivate new interests, cognitive, social and emotional skills, younger generation will feel more comfortable in social interaction, have own identity and be capable of making sound decision, more adept at using AI technology instead of being curated by AI, and the loss of individuality could be mitigated.

This holistic education framework shall be implemented in all schools and private institutions throughout Singapore continuously, with emphasis on primary and secondary schools.

Research:

1. According to the Ministry of Education, they will be implementing cyber wellness lessons to make sure students behave responsibly online and take note of their online behaviour, by introducing more online lessons.

Cyber wellness. (2020, June 30). Ministry of Education | Ministry of Education. Retrieved ,16 July 2020, from: <https://beta.moe.gov.sg/programmes/cyber-wellness/>

2. According to QS, Education 4.0 is a desired approach to learning that aligns itself with the emerging fourth industrial revolution to prepare students for it.

Everything you need to know about education 4.0. (2019, November 14). QS. Retrieved ,16 July 2020, from: <https://www.qs.com/everything-you-need-to-know-education-40/>

3. According to OECD, skills needed for the future include, critical thinking, creativity, practical skills, etc.

(n.d.). OECD.org - OECD. Retrieved, 16 July 2020, from: https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/skills/Skills_for_2030_concept_note.pdf

4. According to OECD, we are facing unprecedented challenges – social, economic and environmental – driven by accelerating globalization and a faster rate of technological developments. At the same time, those forces are providing us with myriad new opportunities for human advancement. This OECD Learning Framework 2030 offers a vision and some underpinning principles for the future of education systems

(n.d.). OECD.org - OECD. Retrieved, 16 July 2020, from: [https://www.oecd.org/education/2030/E2030%20Position%20Paper%20\(05.04.2018\)](https://www.oecd.org/education/2030/E2030%20Position%20Paper%20(05.04.2018))

Solution 2: Cultivation of Good Lifestyle Habits

We, The Dating Lab, shall work together with the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) and Ministry of Education (MOE) to cultivate good lifestyle habits in youths at a very young age. MCCY can collaborate with MOE to provide more opportunities for youths to go outdoors to cultivate new hobby and socialize, rather than just staying at home all the time indulging in social media. Moreover, MCCY can also work with MediaCorp to raise awareness of these activities by putting up posters at bus stops and TV advertisements to promote these activities.

Due to the pervasive use of social media and online apps, human spend more time online than offline. If this type of lifestyle and trend continues, human will get used to living a “curated” life and reliance on online dating to find their partners.

MCCY and MOE play a critical role in reducing the time youth spent online and educating them that life is interesting offline by:

- organising more activities to encourage active and healthy lifestyle, go outdoors to socialise and cultivate new hobby.
- creating more opportunities for youths to participate in volunteers works, community and charity works.
- Promoting youth activities for teenagers. Although MCCY has been organising these activities (eg: , Outward Bound Singapore (OBS), *SCAPE. Team Nila and GetActive Singapore campaign), not enough awareness has been raised and there are many other programs and activities which are not well promoted to the public. It is very important to raise awareness and promote these activities so that youths are aware of these activities and benefit from it.

By cultivating good lifestyle habits, human will regain individuality instead of living a curated life.

This shall be implemented in all sports facilities, community centers, cultural centers and schools, with new theme for each year to continuously attract youths.

Research:

1. According to HelpGuide, exercise has many mental health benefits, such as reducing stress. It also mentions that even a bit every day is better than nothing and taking breaks to be active outdoors can make one feel better, look better, and get more out of life.

Robinson, L. (2019, June). The mental health benefits of exercise. HelpGuide.org. Retrieved July 18, 2020, from <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/the-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise.htm>

2. According to HPB, NurtureSG is a national effort which seeks to foster healthier habits from young. To succeed, we need the active participation of everyone, including families, communities and schools. We hope this Action Plan Report will help to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of inculcating healthier habits from young to lay the foundation for a fit and healthy nation.

<https://www.hpb.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/nurturesg-action-plan-report.pdf>

3. According to The New Paper, there are efforts from NurtureSG taskforce to look after the children's well-being given the increasing trend in health concerns among the young. It recommends ways to cultivate healthier habits in the young.

The New Paper. (2020). Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://www.tnp.sg/news/singapore/ways-cultivate-healthier-habits-kids>.

Solution 3: Upgrading of Dating Services

We, the Dating Lab, shall work with Social Development Networks (SDN) accredited agencies to upgrade current dating services to attract more singles to date physically rather than through online means.

According to market study, most of the SDN accredited agencies organise speed dating to attract singles. However, speed dating services are not attractive to younger generation. In addition, due to the stigma of attending speed dating, many singles opt for online dating instead of speed dating. With online dating apps getting more popular, SDN accredited agencies will not be able to attract singles by speed dating or organizing dinner and karaoke session only. We shall work with SDN accredited agencies to upgrade their dating services and program with the following creative solutions:

- Organise interest-based activities with interesting themes instead of speed dating to attract singles as it allows them to have fun, feel young, mingle, develop relationships and to participate without any stigma or worry about online scams. Some of the interest-based activities are wine appreciation party, perfume workshop, pottery workshop, personal grooming etc. Singles also can join the dating packages which guaranteed rotational activities at discounted price.
- A dating membership will also be implemented, offering perks and benefits to members. Points are accumulated when one joins dating activities which can get rewards such as free trips, free workshops and discounts.
- Organise large scale event on annual basis to promote publicity and enlarge customer base. SDN accredited agency can leverage on their brand and large customer base to secure sponsorship and attractive discounts for their events.
- Promote services via traditional and new media.

By upgrading dating services, SDN accredited agencies will be able to attract singles to date physically, reduce singles' reliance on online dating and AI algorithms and mitigate the loss of individuality.

The upgrade of dating services shall be implemented by SDN accredited agencies by November 2022 and continuously improve with creative events to attract singles.

Research:

1. According to AsiaOne, current SDN activities include tango dance sessions, karaoke, meals and are not very attractive to singles.

SDU, time to get with the times. (n.d.). AsiaOne, Asia's Leading News Portal, Get Latest News at AsiaOne. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from:

<https://www.asiaone.com/News/Education/Story/A1Story20090706-153015.html>

2. According to NLB, the Social Development Network (SDN) was formed in 1984 to encourage social interaction and marriage among graduate singles.

Social development unit is established - Singapore history. (n.d.). Retrieved July 17, 2020, from:

<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/history/events/3c520e6c-dc34-4cef-84f5-1d73062c411b>

3. According to CNA, SDN activities currently have age restrictions to many of its dating activities, which ironically causes age groups of people who are more serious in finding a partner to be excluded.

K. C. Kelvin Seah. (2018, October 20). Commentary: Government matchmaking programmes need a rethink to get singles to Mingle. CNA. Retrieved July 18, 2020, from

https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/sdu-singles-singapore-dating-total-fertility-rate-marriage-10839312?cid=h3_referral_inarticlelinks_24082018_cna

4. According to Today, a woman did not like the process of speed-dating, remarking that she found it stressful and extremely awkward. She also felt very pressured.

Low, Y. J. (2019, October 9). Singapore singles need more opportunities, time and energy to date and meet new people: Survey. TODAYonline. Retrieved July 18, 2020, from <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/singles-need-more-opportunities-time-and-energy-date-and-meet-new-people-survey>

Solution 4: Campaigning

We, the Dating Lab, shall campaign for people to date physically and not through online means. The Ministry of Social and Family Development shall offer grants and incentives to carry out the campaigning. The campaigning will be carried out in two ways:

- 1) Discourage the use of online dating by playing advertisements and putting up posters in public areas about dating scams, sex scams. This may raise alarm bells in online dating users or singles' who are intending to use dating apps to find their partners. Talks should also be given in secondary schools or universities to raise awareness about the dangers of online dating.

- 2) Encourage physical dating by promoting current SDN accredited agencies' dating activities and programs. SDN can work with MediaCorp to advertise its services and promote its services to the singles. Pamphlets can also be given out in public areas, especially in the CBD or young districts where there are many young working adults looking for potential partners. This ensures that more singles are aware of SDN accredited agencies and this will also reduce the stigma of joining dating activities.

By discouraging the use of dating apps and encouraging physical dating by promoting dating services, we hope to attract more singles to find their potential partners physically rather than through online means to achieve our goal of mitigating the loss of individuality.

Research:

1. According to MarketingWeek, Hinge is carrying out a campaign to encourage users to delete its online dating app, to stop them from being hooked on it.

Rogers, C. (2019, August 12). Why dating app hinge wants to be deleted. Marketing Week. Retrieved July 16, 2020, from <https://www.marketingweek.com/dating-app-hinge-marketing-campaign>

Solution 5: Government Incentives

We, the Dating Lab, shall work with the Social Development Network and the Ministry of Social and Family Development to apply for grants from the Ministry of Finance.

The government can offer grants to:

- 1) subsidise SDN accredited agencies who have achieved certain participation rate and success rate. This will provide these agencies with more resources and funds for research and constantly improve their services to attract more singles to attend their dating services and events.
- 2) SDN to promote SDN accredited agencies' activities to attract singles. SDN shall do the higher level of promotion and campaigning for all the accredited agencies.
- 3) offer incentives to singles who are able to participate in SDN accredited agencies activities. Vouchers and perks will be awarded to singles who are able to successfully find their partners through the dating events. This will help to promote their services and encourage more singles to join SDN accredited agencies.

In conclusion, government funding shall make physical dating more appealing and attractive to singles, which will allow them to have more fun in the process of finding their potential partners and reducing their reliance on AI algorithms to make simple decisions for them, thus mitigating the loss of individuality.

Research:

1. According to AsiaOne, to stem Singapore's rapidly falling birth rate, the Government does many useful and wonderful things, one of which is introducing SDU (SDN), the social development unit.

SDU, time to get with the times. (n.d.). AsiaOne, Asia's Leading News Portal, Get Latest News at AsiaOne. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from:

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2. According to HistorySG, The Social Development Network (then known as Social Development Unit) was formed in January 1984 to encourage social interaction and marriage among graduate singles.

Social development unit is established - Singapore history. (n.d.). Retrieved July 17, 2020, from: <https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/history/events/3c520e6c-dc34-4cef-84f5-1d73062c411b>

STEP 4a. Select Criteria

Generate criteria to determine which solution idea does the best job of solving your Underlying Problem and/or addressing the Future Scene situation. Select the 3 most important criteria for measuring solution ideas and write them in the spaces provided.

Criterion 1

Which solution is the fastest to implement, so that it can be implemented within the shortest time to counter the loss of individuality?

Criterion 2

Which solution is the cheapest to implement, so that less money is spent to invest and research on it?

Criterion 3

Which solution is the most effective, so that users can rely on themselves to make decisions, ensuring that users will not experience a loss of individuality in the years 2030 and beyond?

Criterion 4

Which solution is the most attractive to singles, so that more singles will be drawn to dating physically rather than through dating apps which results in a loss of individuality?

Criterion 5

Which solution is the simplest to implement, so that it can be implemented with the least disruptions?

STEP 4b. Apply Criteria

List the solution ideas from Step 3 on the grid. Use each criterion to rank the solutions on a scale from 1 (poorest) to 5 (best). The weighting for one important criterion may be doubled if necessary.

| Step 3 Sol'n # | Solution Idea | Criteria | | | | | Total |
|----------------|--|----------|---|---|---|---|-------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| #1 | Holistic Education | 1 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 10 |
| #2 | Cultivation of good-lifestyle habits | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 14 |
| #3 | Upgrading of dating services | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 21 |
| #4 | Campaigning | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 17 |
| #5 | Government incentives to fund dating services | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 13 |

STEP 5. Develop an Action Plan and Evaluate its Feasibility

Develop your top-scoring solution idea into an Action Plan. Thoroughly explain how the Underlying Problem is solved, how the plan will be implemented, and how the Future Scene will be affected. Explain how this Action Plan is feasible with secondary research consulted, preferably also with primary research (feedback from chosen community / organization).

Action Plan derived from Solution #3

Action Plan

We, The Dating Lab, together with SDN accredited agencies, shall upgrade dating services by November 2022. Subsequently, the action plan has to be reviewed annually to continually upgrade the dating activities with innovative ideas. This will ensure physical dating is able to continuously attract singles to date physically. Thus, the rising trend of individuals' usage of online dating which may result in a loss of individuality could be managed, hence mitigating the loss of individuality.

There are different type of users using dating apps and it is not realistic to attract all the dating apps users to participate in physical dating. The core objective of our action plan is to attract singles who genuinely want to find a partner. We aim to differentiate physical dating from online dating by emphasizing "Physical Dating: Real, Fun and Safe".

Most of the current accredited agencies organise speed dating services for singles. However, speed dating is not attractive to younger generation because participants are put under stressful conditions to get to know everyone and having to introduce one's self repeatedly. We aim to replace speed dating with interest-based activities with interesting themes. A variety of interesting dating sessions will be put into place to encourage fun bonding among singles, having workshops, adventures, sports, personal grooming etc. These activities will allow singles to have fun, feel young, mingle, develop relationships and to participate without any stigma or worry about online scams. Instead of feeling fatigue from trying to find a partner, the ambience is conducive for singles to enjoy the activities, to relax and find the partner they desired. By joining the dating packages, singles will be guaranteed rotational activities and enjoy free perks and benefits from dating membership.

We also aim to organize large scale event, such as cruise trip, party at Singapore Flyer, on annual basis. Singles will be attracted to this event and they can bring along their friends to enjoy discounts. This will help the accredited agencies to promote publicity and create awareness of dating services offered. With a premium brand and large customer base, SDN accredited agencies can secure sponsorship and attractive discounts for their events.

We shall promote our upgraded dating services through posters, brand ambassadors, flyers, TV ads and event booths. We believe spread of words is very effective in promoting our services. We will offer credit points or discount vouchers to members who introduce their friends to join the dating activities. By raising awareness about the many interesting and fun activities offered, we can attract more singles to date physically instead of dating online.

Despite the circuit breaker, we managed to present our solution and action plan to GaiGai, the largest dating company in Singapore. Ms June Lim, Corporate Manager of GaiGai, is generally impressed with our action plan and provides valuable feedback. Ms Lim mentioned that our proposal of dating packages with rotational packages and annual large-scale event are interesting and would like to explore and it is something new that they have not considered before. Ms June Lim shared that making use of successful matches to promote their services is very effective to reach their targeted customer.

However, Ms Lim commented that although dating membership idea is interesting, it may be challenging to find partner to offer discount because of current economy climate. We value Ms Lim's valuable feedback and aim to spend more time in conducting feasibility study with various vendors on dating membership.

After reviewing our action plan with GaiGai, we are convinced that our action plan is able to make physical dating more appealing and singles will rely less on online dating, so the rising trend of individuals' usage of online dating which may result in a loss of individuality could be managed and we would be able to mitigate the loss of individuality.

Implementation timeline

This is our implementation timeline of our action plan:

- 2021 Jan: Designing of membership card, continuous innovation and enhancement of dating activities.
- 2021 Feb: Submit proposal for various partners for review and adjust proposal based on feedback.
- 2021 Mar: Feasibility study with various vendors on dating membership, submit proposal for various partners to review.
- 2021 Apr-May: Continuous innovation and enhancement of dating activities. Submit proposal for various partners for review and adjust proposal based on feedback.
- 2021 Jun: Sourcing of vendors for customer loyalty solutions and large-scale dating events with limited participants on interest-based activities.
- 2021 Jul: Engaging customer database and collect feedback from participants in large scale events for improvement.
- 2021 Aug: Discussion and assessment with SDN and partners on effectiveness and improvement of events.
- 2021 Nov: Digital or physical member card issued, 1st trial test of dating membership in selected retail, collection of feedback and improvement and agreement on sponsors, costs and benefits of membership card.
- 2021 Dec: Implementation of membership card
- 2022 Jan: More interest-based activities, implementation of large-scale dating activities with full-house participation and discussion and assessment with SDN, agreement on sponsors, costs and benefits, and review with partners on effectiveness
- 2022 Aug: Implementation of full upgrading of dating services

Addressing our Key Verb Phrase

- Given that our Key Verb Phrase is “**how might we mitigate the loss of individuality**” caused by the rising trend of individuals’ usage of online dating, our action plan and solution addresses this. By upgrading SDN accredited agencies dating services, ineffective and outdated traditional dating activities will be replaced with interest-based activities with creative themes which offer singles opportunity to network, have fun, feel young and to participate without any stigma or worry about online scams. The implementation of dating membership scheme which offer perks and benefits will make SDN accredited agencies activities more attractive.
- Singles who genuinely want to find a partner would be more likely to turn to the SDN accredited agencies upgraded activities over online dating. Through the activities and events, singles will mingle and interact with other participants. Thus, singles will be able to know their partner better through physical interaction, assessment of behavior, character, core value and interest rather than choosing partners from photos and profiles curated by AI algorithms.
- We have shared our solution and action plan with an SDN accredited agency, GaiGai and managed to obtain positive feedback from them. With this, our action plan is able to make physical dating more appealing and singles will rely less on online dating. By doing so, we shall be able to **mitigate the loss of individuality (KVP)** in Singapore in the years 2030 and beyond.

Impact

- The implementation of upgraded dating activities will positively impact singles who genuinely want to find partner. Instead of choosing between online dating and the traditional speed dating, singles are able to participate in SDN accredited agencies upgraded dating activities.
- The upgraded interest-based activities with creative themes not only allows singles to attend activities and workshops that interests them, these activities also offer singles opportunity to network, have fun, feel young and to participate without any stigma. More importantly, physical dating is real and safe. Singles will not have to worry about fake identity, sex scam, safety concern, financial scam, intrusion of privacy and mental health risks commonly associated with online dating.
- By organizing annual large-scale events, spread of words and promotion of services via media, more singles will be aware about the attractiveness of physical dating and its various activities.
- With more singles attracted to join physical dating activities, singles would be less reliant on online dating and thus mitigating the loss of individuality among singles.
- The action plan will not cause harm to people, but instead make physical dating a more enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Singles would be able to have fun through various activities, find their partner and get to know their partner better.

Supporters

We believe singles, Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), Social Development Network (SDN) accredited agency and hospitality industry would support this idea. For singles, our action plan will make SDN accredited agencies’ activities more

appealing, fun and safe. Singles would be able to enjoy a fulfilling experience, find their right partner and get to know their partner better. With increased participation and success rate, MSF will be able to achieve their objective of encouraging familyhood in Singapore. Lastly, with increased participation rate, SDN accredited agency and hospitality industry will benefit with improved businesses.

Resistors

Potential resistors include online dating companies, online fun seekers, introverts and sponsors. With our action plan, online dating users would be reduced, which causes online dating companies to lose customers and online fun seekers to lose potential matches. Some introverts who do not enjoy physical dating would resist our action plan. In the current economy climate, some sponsors may not support our action plan or offer discount to our members.

Potential Obstacles / Solutions

We have identified four main obstacles to our action plan:

1. Rise in Online Dating

Potential Obstacles

In line with global trend, there is an increasing trend of people using online dating apps to find their partners instead of physical dating. Although we can improve physical dating activities and make it more appealing, there are still some singles who prefer online dating over physical dating.

Solutions

- SDN accredited agencies have to attract singles by upgrading their activities and replacing traditional speed dating with interest based creative themes activities.
- By promotion of dating activities via media and spread of words, more singles will be aware about the attractiveness of physical dating.
- To discourage people from using online dating, raising awareness and educating people on the dangers of online dating will make them think twice about using online dating.

2. Increased competition in the dating industry

Potential Obstacles

There are 10 SDN accredited agencies in Singapore. In addition, these accredited agencies not only have to compete among themselves, they have to compete with online dating apps for customer.

Solutions

- Government offers grant to support these accredited agencies. To ensure healthy competition, these agencies should meet minimum participation rate and success rate before they are entitled to the grant.
- Accredited agencies have to be innovative and find a niche in the market. They can specialize in certain areas, such as speed dating or personalized dating to create variety of choices for singles to choose from.

3. Cooperation from respective partners

Potential Obstacles

To reduce the cost of activities, accredited agencies have to work closely with various agencies and partners. However, due to current economy climate, it is very challenging to secure sponsorship and discount from partners.

In addition, integrating all aspects of the upgraded proposals together will be challenging as sponsors and suppliers may not agree to the proposal due to cost and venues. There may also be disagreements on how dating activities should be carried out and effectiveness of it.

Solutions

- Accredited agencies have to enlarge their customer base and continuously improve their branding in the market. With a premium brand and large customer base, accredited agencies can work out a win-win relationship with the sponsors and suppliers whereby they could benefit from the large customer base and branding.
- More Communication with partners on the upgrading of services action plan so that all parties can agree on how activities should be conducted.

4. Emancipation of women and stigma issues

Potential Obstacles

Our interview with Gai Gai revealed that a big challenge faced by Singapore's dating industry is the emancipation of women and peoples' attitudes towards dating. Today, many people put their career as top priority and have little time to date. Some people prefer to stay single which will greatly reduce participation rate.

Solutions

- Raise awareness about the importance of dating and marriage through campaigns and public talks.
- Government have to encourage dating and marriage by enacting policies and offering incentives.

Research (for Action Plan and Evaluation)

1. According to CNA, SDN activities currently have age restrictions to many of its dating activities, which ironically causes age groups of people who are more serious in finding a partner to be excluded.

K. C. Kelvin Seah. (2018, October 20). Commentary: Government matchmaking programmes need a rethink to get singles to Mingle. CNA. Retrieved July 18, 2020, from https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/sdu-singles-singapore-dating-total-fertility-rate-marriage-10839312?cid=h3_referral_inarticlelinks_24082018_cna

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