CYBER SENIOR

Written Report

Project Cybersenior 7-01

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## Section 1: Overview

1. Area of concern

The 21st century world is becoming increasingly reliant on technology. Yet today, many elderly still struggle to communicate with their families and maintain social interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic. This discrepancy in technological skills leads to a widening generation gap, where elderly experience cannot relate to today's world. Hence, we propose a course that aids elderly in using technology. It equips them with the necessary skills to navigate their devices and the internet with greater ease and confidence so that they can stay connected with the larger community and the younger generations in their family.

2. Challenges identified

Elderly should utilize technology to stay in contact with friends and family and to access information from the internet. However, elderly lack opportunities to learn in a conducive environment with proper guidance, and are shunned by the younger generation when seeking help, due to lack of time or patience. Hence, conducting a course where they have useful materials and patient, tech-savvy teachers can help them improve their lives via technology.

3. Underlying problem

Distribution of internet users worldwide as of 2019, by age group

- 65+ 7%
- 55–64 10%
- 45–54 14%
- 35–44 19%
- 18–24 18%
- 25–34 32%
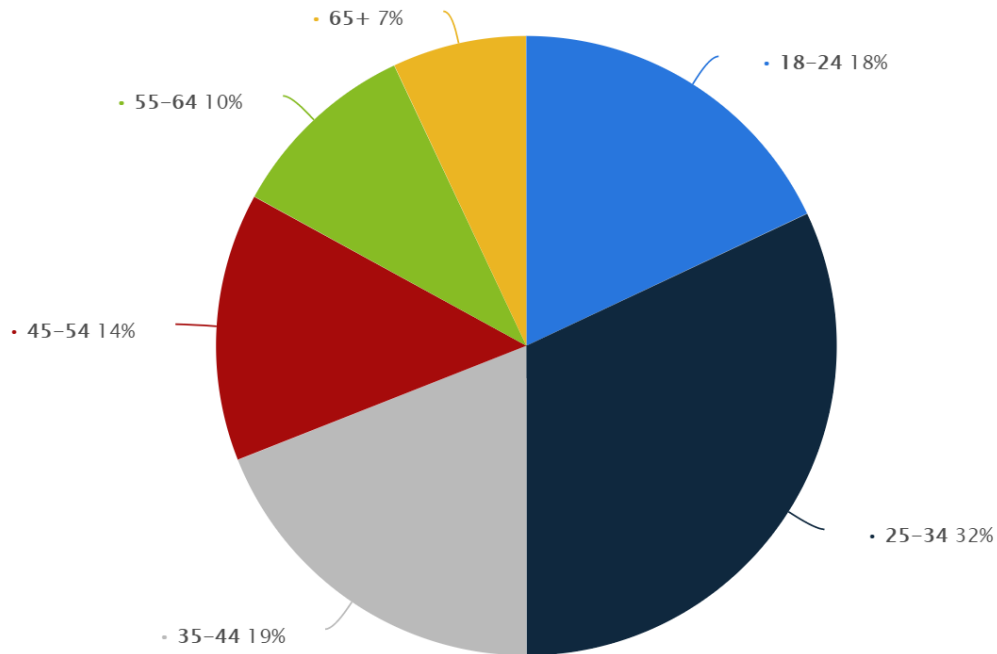
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The pie chart shows a significant difference in the elderly using the internet (17% for 55 and above) compared to the rest of the population, suggesting that they are less digitally connected, hindering their abilities in utilising the internet.

"When they try to download certain apps, and just ask a few questions, the tone from their (children) changes, they get very impatient or start shouting…. That's why the elderly may feel like withdrawing and not want to learn anymore… Somebody must have the patience to teach them."

- Madam Grace Lee, a senior aged 60 who was interviewed by TODAY Online regarding why some elderly shun technology

Many elderly are unfamiliar with technology, thus being intimidated by its steep learning curve. Furthermore, digitally proficient youths are impatient when teaching, or do not make the effort to teach at all. This causes the elderly to feel alienated and helpless, leading them to shun technology. Given that the elderly lack confidence and proficiency in digital technology in the current situation, how might we provide them with a suitable learning experience and build a learning community to improve their digital literacy and encourage other youths to do the same so that more elderly can be equipped for the digital age?

4. Plan of action

We analysed what previous teams did and conducted our needs analysis via research and interviews. We also discussed with our project mentor and coordinated with CDAC to start planning.

After conducting our needs analysis where we interviewed people aged 12 - 20 and 50 - 65, we produced topics. The initial plan was to do 12 face-to-face lessons and walk-in consultation sessions for any elderly members who had queries about technology.

The lesson plans covered topics such as
- Basic computer and handphone skills
- Important online services
- Entertainment, communication apps
- Online scams

Due to the COVID-19 situation, we had to make changes. To ensure efficiency, we discussed with CDAC's coordinator on how to work around the new regulations.

Afterwards, we archived less relevant lesson topics on our website, and shifted consultations online. We made weekly Instagram posts providing tips on teaching the elderly and shared student experiences teaching their grandparents, to encourage other youths to teach their own grandparents.

We started the online lessons (1.5hrs every Sunday). We did detailed demonstrations, and walkthroughs of applications and services. The participants were also provided with handouts for their own reference.

Section II: Implementation of action

Date	Actions	Outcomes
Early January	- Taking over of project - Research on how to improve from past years - Need analysis interviews - Analysing data collected - Discussions with mentor and previous project members - Liaising with beneficiary (CDAC)	Interaction Understanding problem
Late January	- Targeting underlying problem - Planning lesson schedule and timeline - Creating publicity materials - Preparing lesson materials	Awareness Vision

Month	Activities	Category
March	• Preparing lesson materials • Publicising our lesson course with CDAC • Rescheduling project due to schedule changes with CDAC	Vision
April	• Preparation for proposal evaluations • Preparing lesson materials • Recruiting volunteers	Vision
May	• Discussion with coordinator at CDAC about changes due to COVID-19 • Repurposing lesson materials to better fit online platforms • Creating social media posts (Instagram) to help guide youth / encourage youth to help the elderly	Interaction
June	• Continue making instagram posts • Replanning lesson schedule	Interaction Adaptation
July	• Start lessons • Start consultation sessions • Continue making instagram posts • Start new series of Instagram posts (student sharing) • Editing website as necessary	Interaction Awareness
August	• Continue making instagram posts • Continue new series of Instagram posts (student sharing) • Continue lessons • Continue consultation sessions • Prepare for final evaluations and write project report	Interaction Awareness

Section III: Project Outcome

1. Accomplishments

We've impacted:

- 6 elders who attended our lesson course
- 200 youth through our social media posts

Lesson participants learnt more about technology, and clarified their queries via consultations. Our social media presence has helped the youth to learn how to help their own grandparents, and encouraged them to be more proactive. Although COVID-19 has greatly impacted our project due to its tech-heavy nature, we still managed to achieve our goals: helping out the elderly and encouraging the youth to help in their own time. To ensure sustainability, our materials are publicly available on our website, allowing either seniors or youths to refer to it.

2. Reflections

Through this project, we interacted with elderly and adapted to their needs. For example, some elderly were less tech-savvy than others leading to lesson pacing issues. We learnt to be flexible and split the class into different groups, each with their own pace to satisfy the learning needs of every senior, hence nobody would be held back while those who needed more time would receive it.

We did group reflections after each lesson, discussing improvements and adjustments to continue addressing the learning needs of the elderly, improving quality and satisfaction with each lesson.

Ultimately, both the elderly and us benefited from this project. Through our interactions with the elderly, we empathised with them, and learnt important values such as patience. Additionally, this project allowed us to reflect on our privilege of growing up around a technologically advanced age.

Although the elderly struggle to catch up with the ever-growing technological age, nobody is making the effort to slow down and help them. Hence, we are grateful for the opportunity we were given to help those who came before us.

3. Scope of impact

<u>Impact on elderly:</u>

We conducted a feedback form, asking the participants what they learned and received positive responses as shown below. When asked if they had any comments about how we could improve our project, all but one replied that they felt it was good, while the one who did not wanted more lessons on Zoom in particular. Additionally, when asked to rate our lesson course out of 5, with 1 being the worst and 5 being the best, the average score was 4.5 out of 5.

1. 您对《乐龄电脑课程：我是科技达人！》有多满意?
4
4
5
4
5
5

5. 请与我们分享您在课中所获得的最大收获或最宝贵的经验：

Good

让我更了解科技的功效，让生活更方便！

More confident to try out apps for using social media and entertainment.

good

都有 (all have)

More to understand the application routine.

7. 请列出其他意见或觉得课程可以改进的地方

对我来说都很好。对我来说都很好。

更多Zoom 的课程

Nil

No comments

so far so good

nil

Impact on youth:

We impacted 200 youths through our social media, and through the "Student Sharing" posts, learnt that our materials were useful to the youth and that we could indirectly impact the elderly through encouraging the youth. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 measures, volunteer participation was cancelled.

How we addressed the underlying problem

We provided the elderly with a suitable learning environment to improve their digital literacy by conducting a course, helping them gain confidence and proficiency in digital technology, while making our lesson materials easily accessible for reference. We encouraged other youths to do the same through the graphics on our Instagram page, sharing both tips on

how they could help their grandparents and improving the teaching experience, and sharing of other students' experiences with teaching elderly for them to use as reference when facing similar issues, allowing even more elderly to be equipped to embrace the digital age.

References:

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