Critical Analysis

Psyc213

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Abstract

The essay focuses on critically analyze the effects of internet usage on older people by reviewing various literatures. There are total of 7 literatures reviewed for the same. In order to critically analyze the situation, it was found that there are positive and negative impacts of internet usage on older people. There were different factors like age, financial situation, and gender. Different studies suggested that the impacts are positive and others shows the challenges faced by the older people in the same context. After understanding the mixed evidences on the topic at hand, it was evident to compare the goods versus the bad. It was found that goods can overcome the bad by implementing the some policies. These policies should be focused on increasing the digital literacy of the older people. This digital literacy could only be improved with the help of increasing the knowledge of the older people over the digital privacy, effectively communicating in the social groups. One study identified the factors that were quite efficient with the internet usage in older people.

Introduction

Social media online has grown into an essential aspect of numerous people's daily routines in the modern era, offering venues for sharing private information, establishing and sustaining acquaintances, and forging social ties. Elderly folks generally participate less in social media activities like messaging, tweeting, and internet streaming, even though younger people are frequently at the center of these developments. Variations in utilization of technology add to this technological gap, with older persons having fewer devices and spending less online than younger workers. Despite these tendencies, evidence suggests that more time, healthier lives are typically experienced by older persons who participate in cognitively challenging activities and have strong actual life connections. Nonetheless, there is ongoing discussion on the impacts of using the web on elderly people' health, with conflicting data pointing to both favorable and unfavorable outcomes. This work investigates the complicated connection amongst older individuals' use of the web and their well-being, looking at the possible advantages, difficulties, and effects on future study and policy. The essay will have literature review section as the body. The main reason behind this is to critically analyze the literatures for the same.

Literature Review

There are many researches on this topic where this topic has been discussed in great depth. There were different results found for the same. Some studies have suggested that the impact of internet usage on the health of older people is higher than that of the non-users. Whereas, some have suggested that the result formulated in those studies is totally opposite. Out of the total 122 older persons surveyed, 57% said they used the web daily, 12% said they used it weekly, 6% said they used it monthly, and 25% said they never utilized it at all. 53% of those surveyed said they had been regularly using the web for a minimum of five years, compared to

16% who had begun their online journey between one to five years, 6% who had been using it for a shorter period of time, and 25% who had never used it at all (Erickson & Johnson, 2011). Based on these results, higher percentage of adults were healthier when they were using the internet and keeping their connections online. The average for the social support and self-efficacy were found to be highest according to the same study.

The main found themes were communication and social connectedness according to almost every study on this topic. The initial topic was how older persons' engagement with the web affects their relationships with relatives and close friends. The establishment and maintenance of supportive social networks constituted the second aspect of social connectivity. The older people quality of life (QOL) is affected by the socializing and communication on social media platforms (Aggarwal et al., 2020). The impact of social media utilization can be understood from its usage, on the basis of age it has been utilized by, and the gender. To critically analyze it, it is important to look at the advantages, challenges, mixed opinions, and implication on the health of the older people using the internet. These impacts can be identified with the help of proper research and using the information gathered from those researches to overcome the challenges faced by the older adults.

The Advantages of Online Social Networking for Older Adults

The elder people use the internet at a very less frequency than the younger people, however the benefits they can get from it are more than what younger people have. One of the main profit from it is keeping the relationships alive with the help of social interaction online. Regardless of their geographic location, older individuals can maintain relationships with friends, relatives, and contacts by using social media sites like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. This is especially helpful for senior citizens who might feel socially isolated or lonely as a result

of things like retirement, losing a partner, or having limited ability to move around (Erickson & Johnson, 2011). Strong relationships with others are linked to greater mental and physical wellness in older persons, including a lower chance of anxiety, memory loss, and ongoing medical conditions, according to research. They are able to make social groups where they find people with like minds and connect with them. This gives the older adults an ability to make the strong connections and get on with their lives.

Within community forums, online networking sites can let people share their expertise, encounters, and psychological assistance. Over discussion boards as well as assistance groups, older individuals who are going with similar hardships or life transitions—like taking on care giving obligations or dealing with a persistent illness—can discover compassion and assistance. These online networks offer chances for advice-sharing, expertise approval, and motivation to one another, which strengthens a person's sense of social connection and inclusion (Roggeveen et al., 2021). With seniors, using the internet can encourage continuous education and mental stimulation. Senior citizens can keep cognitively active, pursue intellectual interests, and learn fresh abilities by having access to electronic libraries, learning platforms, and internet-based resources. Engaging in online forums, perusing papers, or engaging in brain-training activities can assist senior citizens in preserving their cognitive abilities and delaying the onset of cognitive decline caused by age.

Internet Usage Problems for Seniors

There are too many difficulties surrounding the internet usage for seniors when compared with the advantages. The gap that has been between the younger and older people is the primary cause (Pirhonen et al., 2020). These differences can be understood from the gap in technological usage when schooling, economic status, and age is compared. The older people from low socio-

economic backgrounds have quite a less knowledge digitally. They find themselves frustrated with complex user interfaces. They are unable to understand the confidentiality settings and find themselves confused in the identification of reliable online sources. There is a subsequent harm for the health of older people when they overuse the internet. They become prone to different diseases as there screen times prolongs. It results in sedentary lifestyles which is the reason behind so many diseases. Also, the elders are mostly targeted by the scammers as they have less knowledge regarding the online privacy. They lack in digital competency which is the primary reason behind their targeting by the hackers and scammers. The internet usage can be the reason behind their isolation from real social connection (Ibarra et al., 2020). The virtual social connection forces them not to interact with the people offline. Studies indicate that overindulgence in social media, typified by involuntary scrolling and contrasting oneself with someone else, may result in emotions of unworthiness, jealousy, and despondency, commonly referred to as "social media envy." They are not able to understand the changes in the technology that makes them unable to go with the flow. It makes them online inept to understand the fast-paced younger counterparts.

Conflicting Research on the Effects of Using the Internet on Health

Many pieces of conflicting data from study results about the complex and multidimensional connection that exists between senior people' internet usage and health. Although some research has linked internet access to beneficial indicators of happiness like mental toughness, social connectivity, and fulfillment in life, other research have shown the opposite, with increasing rates of anxiety, sadness, and isolation. The variety of internet-based behaviors and attitudes among older persons could be one reason for these disparities (Merkel & Hess, 2020). The web can improve the QoL for certain elderly individuals by giving them a

source of recreation, companionship, and knowledge. On the contrary, for some people, using the internet can make social injustices worse, create gaps between generations, and increase emotions of technological anxiety and overwhelm by technology. According to a person's unique circumstances, including age, gender, financial situation, and state of fitness, the effects of using the web on satisfaction may differ. Utilization of the internet may have different effects on older persons who have become physically weak, socially withdrawn, or live alone than on people who are fit, socially engaged, and reside with close companions (Erickson & Johnson, 2011). These studies have mixed results and understanding the situation in a better way requires much more research than available on the same.

Consequences for Upcoming Studies and Regulation

More study is required in order to comprehend the processes behind these correlations and to discover ways for optimizing the advantages of the web while limiting potential hazards, considering the intricacy of the connection between online usage and happiness amongst older persons. Researches that emphasize on understanding the internet usage habits especially the social media usage can be quite useful for the identification of long-term impacts of the same on them (Holm et al., 2021). They can also help in the identification of possible facilitators and mediators that help in the increased or decreased internet usage by the older people. Interventions targeted at enhancing older individuals' knowledge of technology, internet smart, and technological safety may help lessen the adverse impacts of web usage while giving them the ability to choose wisely what they do digitally. For seniors looking to improve their computer skills, volunteer programs, free library services, and eldercare facilities could be invaluable tools offering instruction, help with technology, and encouragement from others. Age-friendly locations, offerings, and innovations should take older individuals' digital requirements and

tastes into account, according to lawmakers and medical professionals (Erickson & Johnson, 2011). Efforts aimed at enhancing internet accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and functionality for senior citizens may serve to lower obstacles to digital engagement and advance social justice in the age of technology. These efforts can change the scenario of digital literacy for older adults in these situations.

Conclusion

In summary, there is a complicated and varied association between older persons' online activity and happiness, with both good and adverse effects documented in the literature. Social media on the internet can be a great way to connect with people, stimulate the mind, and obtain knowledge, but it may also come with drawbacks including digital disparity, problems with security, and loneliness. In a growing digital environment, further policy and study initiatives should focus on addressing these issues and optimizing the probable advantages of internet access for enhancing older individuals' well-being. Through the promotion of digital participation, continuous education, and the development of networks of support, they can provide older persons all the necessary skills and adaptability to successfully traverse the digital world, thereby improving their quality of life and general wellbeing. Overall, the impact of internet usage can be deemed as positive for the older people and can be shift into a much better platform for them by providing the required education.

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