INCLUSION WITH CAUTION! DIGITAL LITERACY AMONG RETIRED PEOPLE IN SAUDI ARABIA

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INTRODUCTION

- This research highlighted the voice of missing stakeholders in our technology-oriented community, those who are 60 years old and above. The research investigates the ICT use experiences of Saudi senior citizens and their obstacles when dealing with ICT.
THE SAUDI CONTEXT

Demographics:

▪ The total Saudi population in the kingdom is 34,218,169.
▪ %72.1 of the Saudi population are between 15 and 65
▪ Elderly (65 years old and above) consists 3.2% of the population
▪ 60 years old is a cutoff age for retirement
▪ Saudi senior citizens who are 60 years old and above comprises only %5 from the total population

ICT Aspects:

▪ The number of internet users in reached more than 26 million users in 2017 compared to 23.8 million users in 2016.
▪ The availability of internet services has increased from %46 in 2014 to %82 in 2017
▪ Shift to implement e-Government services
▪ The Saudi Vision 2030 aims to transform the Saudi society into a technology-based society that is inclusive for all people
PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In order to create digitally inclusive communities:
- Access
- Adoption
- Application

Challenges:
- Access to technology
- Networks of support
- Motivation to acquire ICT skills

In order to investigate ICT use for Saudi senior citizens, it is important to consider their acceptance of the technology (TAM)
PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Figure 1. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) for senior citizens and their acceptance of ICT in Turkey (Guner & Acarturk, 2018)

*Significant at p < .01 level
1. What are the ICT use experiences of Saudi senior citizens?

2. What aspects that might affect the ICT use of Saudi senior citizens?

3. What are the obstacles that Saudi senior citizens face when dealing with ICT?
METHOD

▪ Study Design:
  This is an exploratory study that utilizes a qualitative method for collecting data through structured interviews.

▪ Study Sample:
  Five participants for the study were selected based on a purposeful sample design. the criteria of selection was modified due to limited resources:
  a. Saudi citizen,
  b. Retired employee
  c. Involvement in formal or informal ICT training at the time of this study

▪ Data Collection and Analysis:
  The interview questions were open-ended questions provided to participants in a written form and included three parts:
  a. Demographics
  b. ICT use
  c. ICT challenges.
# RESULTS

Demographics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>ICT Experience</th>
<th>ICT First Use</th>
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<tr>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESULTS OF QUESTION (1)

Q1: What are the ICT use experiences of Saudi senior citizens?

ICT applications use:
- Social-oriented applications: (ex: WhatsApp, Snapchat, YeeCall)
- Service-oriented applications: (ex: e-banking, travel reservations)

Acquiring ICT skills:
- Self-learning: work-related skills such as grading and doing presentations, search in Google, and trial and error.
- Assistance from others: children, siblings, husband, and friends.

CT first use experience:
- All participants expressed some difficulties in their first use of ICT due to the unfamiliarity with the technology.
- The participants agreed that technologies nowadays has become easier than before.
Q2: What aspects that might affect the ICT use of Saudi senior citizens?

Networks of support

Children or friends: children set up their accounts and taught them how to use the applications.

Education

Educational level impacted the way seniors acquired ICT skills. Participants with graduate degrees (i.e. Masters) were more independent on themselves to learn ICT skills.

Motivation

- Social influence: communicate with children, stay connected with children who studied abroad, stay connected with friends after retirement.
- Satisfying daily needs: monitor their bank accounts, make online money transaction.
- Being updated: read online news paper.
RESULTS OF QUESTION (2)

Q2: What aspects that might affect the ICT use of Saudi senior citizens?

Facilitating conditions:

▪ Sufficient on-job training: helped a banker to hone her ICT skills
▪ Insufficient on-job training: affected one teacher’s ICT skills negatively as she felt incompetent.
▪ The financial status: buying a new phone for her “with a mirror” instead of an old one “with buttons”

Anxiety:

▪ Social Isolation: Participants used not to allow their children to use their phone when family gathered but their behavior have changed over time
▪ Peer pressure: A participant still use ground line to call her friend because they do not use smartphones
Q3: What are the obstacles that Saudi senior citizens face when dealing with ICT?

- ICT skills took a long time to learn
- Issues related to aging and memory
- The familiarity with the old technologies make new technologies more challenging to learn for some elderly (touch screen instead of buttons)
- Variations in ICT skills among elderly even from the same age
IMPLICATIONS

- Consider that not all senior citizens are “technophobic”
- Consider senior citizens preferences when designing the ICT applications to satisfy their needs
- Some factors found to be influencing in ICT use experiences as expressed by participants
  - Networks of support
  - Motivation to learn
  - Education
  - Facilitating conditions
- To overcome the challenges that senior citizens face when dealing with ICT, these factors need to be considered
Thank you for attending this presentation, please rate the presentation in AECT forum and let us hear from you...

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