PAPER

Acceptance and Use

S. KAIJANEN, L. STENBERG. How to empower old people to join the digitalization of services? Gerontechnology 2018;17(Suppl):58s; https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.058.00 **Purpose** In Finland there are 5.5 million inhabitants. More than 500 000 people aged 55+ don't use internet or digital services at all[1]. Most of them have challenges using digital devices such as smart phones and computers. The purpose of this study was to find out the strategies old people use to manage with the digitalization of services and what kind of challenges they experience when using these. **Method** The study was designed together with Finnish Ministry of Finance and several NGO's involved with these issues. The questionnaire was sent to elderly care facilities, local voluntary organisations across Finland and regional councils of elderly in municipalities. The questionnaires were spread both as an electronic version as well as a paper print. We received 870 answers: 391 electronic answers through the internet and 479 on paper. The questionnaire included multiple choice and open questions. **Results & Discussion** The answers were divided into two categories; those who answered electronically and those who answered the paper questionnaire. Answers on paper: 44% of respondents reported they didn´t use any digital services at all, 37% used some services. Over 60% said that they hadn´t purchased any tickets or even checked the time tables via internet. Answers through the internet: 90% reported that they used digital services daily. Most of them (70%) had purchased tickets or some products online. The most common services used, were banking services and the electronical identification. Only 25% of all the respondents said that they never used digital identification. Most common reasons were the lack of devices, experience needed and knowledge or perceived security risk. In both categories, 60% reported that someone else helped them use digital services and devices. The received help was from relatives, friends, and voluntary peer groups[2]. The findings of this study suggest five recommendations to enhance inclusion in the digital society[3]:
(1) Old people need to be included in service development. More focus is needed on easy to use devices, digital services reliability and technology where usage is not dependent on user ability.
(2) Professional low-cost advice should be offered when choosing, buying or using technological and digital services.
(3) The digital services should be free of charge (public) or at low cost.
(4) The accessibility of services need to be promoted and the possibility of face-to face communication kept as an option[4].

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