

Bridging the "Digital Divide": The Elderly Should Not Be Excluded from the Digital Society

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid development of modern society and Internet technology, the elderly, as a relatively vulnerable group, still have some obvious deficiencies in the process of accessing and using the Internet. There is an invisible gap between the elderly and the young in the rapid development of the development. Under the background of active aging, how to narrow the gap between the old and the young, equally enjoy the technology bring life bring convenience, how to make the development of new technology to benefit everyone, regardless of age everyone Shared digital society, achieving the elderly and the common progress of science and technology is worth further thinking.

Keywords: *The elderly, Digital divide, Digital*

1. THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IS THE PRODUCT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TIMES

In 2020, China's Internet industry will play a positive role in the prevention and control of COVID-19 and the normalization of the epidemic. With the progress and development of technology, the intelligent era brings great convenience to us, but it also brings a lot of inconvenience to the elderly. Some places do not accept cash, and there is no health code, which leads to the inconvenience of travel from time to time. Many elderly people are facing a big or small "digital divide". Although the elderly have a certain demand for the Internet and new things, they are still in a relatively weak position in the process of accessing the Internet and are faced with certain challenges. The digital divide excludes most older people from the Internet, resulting in their low level of using Internet resources to engage in various activities. From a sociological point of view, the digital divide produces "social exclusion".[1]

2. ELDERLY GROUPS EXPRESS THEIR NEEDS THROUGH THE INTERNET

In the process of global rapid digitalization, some elderly groups have begun to actively integrate into the Internet and become the groups that need to be paid attention to in the field of mobile Internet. The Internet has brought great convenience to our life. The use of

Internet-based social media can meet the various needs of the elderly population to varying degrees, and thus gradually guide them to transition from the era of traditional media to the new media environment of mobile intelligence.

2.1. The Emotional Needs Of The Elderly

Since most of the elderly have little understanding and use of the Internet, they often encounter some difficulties in the process of using the Internet. In the process of seeking advice from their children or grandchildren, they can enhance their feelings and increase the communication between family members. Especially in the countryside, with the development of urbanization, many young people leave the village to work in the city, and the communication between parents and children becomes less smooth under the traditional media. Therefore, the elderly can get in touch with their children and exchange feelings with them through the Internet. The Internet, as a medium and a tool to maintain emotions, solves the sense of loss and loneliness of the elderly and satisfies their emotional needs.

2.2. The Needs Of Daily Life

With the popularization of the Internet, mobile payment methods such as WeChat and Alipay are also gradually popularizing. All kinds of life consumption expenses can be completed through mobile phones,

which reduces a lot of cumbersome steps and saves a lot of trouble. During the epidemic, the Internet played a huge role. Online medical consultation saved a lot of time and avoided cross-infection to the greatest extent in the process of seeing a doctor for the elderly. During the epidemic period, "green travel code" has brought great convenience to epidemic prevention work, and using the network to solve problems is the trend of The Times and a necessary skill in life. In addition, the emergence of fresh e-commerce during the epidemic period makes it possible to purchase daily necessities online, which provides great convenience for the elderly who are inconvenient to travel and reduces the safety risks and hidden dangers of the elderly travel.

2.3. The Need For Information Access

Social media is an important platform for information flow. Unlike traditional media such as radio and TV, which can only passively receive information, the Internet enables the elderly to independently search for the information they want to obtain. The rich and diverse information on the Internet can meet the diversified information needs of the elderly. Traditional social media usually take young people as the target audience, while the elderly are usually not considered as the audience of mass information, and the elderly can get less information. After the elderly use the Internet, they can find the information they want at any time. In particular, health programs and information have become the focus of their information attention.

2.4. The Need To Expand Your Social Circle

Many elderly people suddenly reduce their social companions and peer groups after retirement, which makes them extremely prone to loneliness. This sense of social disconnection and loss is extremely likely to lead to social problems. But through the use of the Internet, it is easy to get in touch not only with family members, but also with old friends. By joining various interest groups on the Internet, I have expanded my interests and met more friends from all over the world. My life after retirement has become more colorful, which greatly enriches the life style of the elderly group in their later years.

3. CAUSES OF THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AMONG THE ELDERLY

Although some elderly people have great enthusiasm and demand for the use of the Internet, as a relatively vulnerable group, the elderly still face certain challenges in the contact with new media. Compared with the young, the elderly group is more prone to digital divide due to knowledge, technology, infrastructure and economic status. Only by deeply understanding the causes of digital divide can we better understand the

existing deficiencies of the elderly group and narrow the gap between the elderly and the young.

3.1. Knowledge And Technology Factors

The lack of motivation and unwillingness to learn after retirement is one of the major obstacles to the progress of the elderly. In the ever-changing development, the lack of learning ability of the elderly is easy to keep up with the development of The Times and thus lag behind. In addition, older people's ability to understand and learn new things has decreased, so there are still some difficult parts to understand about the rapidly developing Internet world outside. The elderly have a low ability to actively search and obtain information on the Internet, and are reluctant to actively use some new applications due to reasons such as usage habits and distrust of new technologies. These restrictive factors cause certain obstacles for the elderly to learn to use the Internet and to find the knowledge they want on the Internet.

3.2. Factors Of Internet Environment

With the rapid development of the Internet, network fraud is common in recent years. One of the biggest characteristic of current information in the Internet is a huge amount of information, and all kinds of good and bad are intermingled information in the Internet world exist at the same time, combined with the children in the family is deceived to prevent the elderly, biased tell old people on the Internet at home is a liar, education of the elderly home far away from the Internet, making the elderly moment in a state of self protection,More dare not contact some new knowledge of the Internet. In addition, too much information transmission on the Internet is easy to cause information overload, which increases the psychological pressure of information use for the elderly, and even produces information anxiety.

3.3. Infrastructure Factor

Although the Internet penetration rate of Chinese people has reached 70.4% at present, there are still nearly 30% people who have not contacted or used the Internet, and the elderly in this part of the group are the majority, especially the rural elderly. It can be seen that China still suffers from insufficient communication technology and Internet infrastructure. According to the China Statistical Yearbook (2019), by the end of 2018, there were 73.1 computers per 100 urban households and 26.9 computers per 100 rural households on average.[2] In addition, young people dominate the rural population who own computers. As a result, the number of computers owned by the elderly is extremely low. Therefore, the lack of infrastructure is one of the important reasons for the digital divide among the elderly.

3.4. Socio-economic Status Factors

Chinese old people spent mainly through the way of family pension after retirement in later life, the source of the funds mainly through retirement or give children, especially the rural old people don't work after almost no economic sources, mainly rely on their children to look after them, from a certain extent, this determines the elderly after retirement face decline in social and economic status, there is almost no financial source of access to Internet equipment. In addition, some cultural and psychological factors also have a certain impact on the digital divide of the elderly. Some rural elderly people deviate from traditional concepts and reality due to their low level of education and traditional customs, which also affect their effective use of the Internet.

4. THE ELDERLY SHOULD NOT BE LEFT OUT OF DIGITISATION

In the new media environment, in order to bridge the digital divide, it is necessary to carry out targeted media literacy education for the elderly. The author believes that the promotion of the media literacy of the elderly mainly depends on the joint efforts of the family, social environment and individuals. How to solve the digital divide dilemma, so that the elderly can also ride on the development of The Times, and share the dividends of social development is the problem we must think about.

First of all, it is a necessary prerequisite for the elderly to give full play to their own subjective initiative. As for the elderly themselves, they should maintain a positive and optimistic attitude, have the courage to try various application software related to daily life, improve their digital application ability, and strive to adapt to the social life in the rapidly developing digital age.

Secondly, support from family and peer groups is a huge driver for older people to bridge the digital divide. In China's traditional culture, the education mode is a typical top-down traditional education mode. But when it comes to Internet use, the opposite should be true. In the rapidly developing Internet society, facing new things, the speed and ability of the elderly group to accept new things is just not as fast as the young. The younger generation should try their best to explain and impart new knowledge to the elderly and promote their ability to accept new things.[3]

Thirdly, the training of Internet knowledge should be strengthened for the elderly. In view of the information trend of the rapid development of the Internet and the information needs that the elderly hope to obtain, necessary training should be carried out for the elderly. In particular, to overcome and eliminate the fear of intelligent devices, willing to accept new things, so as to better adapt to and integrate into the current new

media environment. The lifelong education system is actively advocated to provide a way for the elderly to actively learn new Internet knowledge, enhance the digital skills of the elderly, and timely keep up with the rapid development of the society.

Finally, draw on the excellent experience of other countries, strengthen top-level design, and promote the active cooperation and support of all social parties. To narrow the digital divide, it is not enough to rely solely on the power of the elderly and their families and peers. The government can give play to the power of top-level design through increasing legislation and financial support, which is conducive to accelerating the bridging of the digital divide. As an Internet power, the United States also attaches great importance to the problem of digital divide. The U.S. government spent \$4 billion in 2009 to close the country's Internet coverage gap and bridge the digital divide.[4] In addition, South Korea has also introduced a series of related policies to narrow the digital divide, including the Digital Divide Act (2001) and the Digital Divide Plan (2004-2005), which cost 190 million yuan, which have made great contributions to narrow the digital divide.[5] In addition, relevant departments can also introduce relevant policies to strengthen the supervision of the network social environment, build the network information security defense system, and try their best to ensure that the elderly have a safe network environment.

5. CONCLUSION

In the Internet and social economic depth fusion and an ageing population growing background, based on the social support theory Angle of view, by the government, the elderly, the elderly its networks, and infrastructure such as multivariate main body, can for the old bridge to build a system of digital divide, social support system of science. We should mobilize the whole society to work with the elderly to bridge the digital divide and share the dividends of The Times.

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