Introduction to the Seniors' Use of Digital Resources Minitrack

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The United Nations define ageing societies all over the world to be one of the grand challenges of humankind over the next few decades. This year (i.e. 2020), the number of people aged older than 60 are expected to outnumber children younger than 5 years. [1].

Information and communication systems are widely expected to support senior citizens in living a longer self-sustained life and to be included in the active part of society. However, although older people increasingly use technology and specifically smartphones [2], research still has no thorough understanding about the specific motivational factors that drive this group's technology adoption, and - most importantly- continuous use. Thus, IS research needs to provide answers to the resulting questions. Amongst those are:

1. (1) Our picture of aging needs to change: "60 is the new 50" [3] is a commonly cited phrase underlining the insight that physically older adults are feeling mentally younger over the last years. This change in cognitive abilities and self-perception has important implications for research that all too often still uses physical age as a key control variable. Although research from psychology developed approaches for the measurement of cognitive age, we still have no good understanding of its specifics when it comes to technology adoption. What is the implication of diverging physical and cognitive age for the adoption and use of technology, and how can we measure it?

2. (2) As seniors are more and more open to using technology -and specifically smartphones- this market opens up for health and/or well-being related applications. However, although we see an increasing demand, the understanding of the specifics of seniors' needs is still in its infancy. Middle aged managers guiding young engineers to develop applications for senior citizens is not a promising route for successful development of solutions for the aging generation. Research needs to provide adoption models specifically target for this group of users.

The papers in this minitrack address the grand challenge of ageing populations.

Jaana and Paré present their work "Use of Connected Care Technologies and Self-tracking Behaviors among Elderly in Canada: A Comparison to the General Population". The authors investigate the use of mhealth technologies by senior citizens and compare those to the general population. Interestingly, they find that seniors do not necessarily differ much from the general population with respect to the use of mhealth technologies.

Karanasios, Cooper, Adrot and Mercieca present their paper "Gatekeepers Rather than Helpless: An Exploratory Investigation of Seniors' Use of Information and Communication Technology in Critical Settings". In this research the authors investigate how seniors handle information and communication technology in critical situations. The authors show that seniors are not helpless individuals in crisis situations, as society often assumes.

Wang, Gewald, Lin and Prentice present their work "Too old to Shop? A Comparative Analysis of the Engagement of Junior and Senior Customers in Social Commerce" where the analyze how seniors engage in social shopping. The comparative nature of their study shows significant differences between younger and older adults, when it comes to social commerce.

Alex, Lottridge and Wuensche present their paper „Artificial Companions in Stroke Rehabilitation: Likeability, Familiarity and Expectations". They

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investigate the use of artificial companions in a stroke rehabilitation context. Their findings how that Selecting a familiar companion that supports reminiscence is an important opportunity for the rehabilitation of elderly people.

Finally, the paper "The Moderating Effect of Different Types of Internet Use on the Relationship between Transitional Aging Changes and Self-esteem of Older Adults" by Lai, Kwok, Rochelle, Leung, Li, Zhang, Wong and Lu is a research-in-progress. The authors aim to study how different types of Internet use mitigate the negative effect of transitional aging changes on self-esteem in older adults in Hong Kong.

We are looking forward to further researchers building on the knowledge provided in these papers and presenting their own research dealing with the issue of ageing populations.

References

[1] United Nations (2017), World Population Prospects - The 2017 Revision
[2] Pew Research Center (2017), Tech Adoption Climbs Among Older Adults
[3] United nations (2019), 60 is the new 50: Rethinking ageing in the SDGs era