

## **Assessment Component 2**

### **Supporting Paper**

#### **Topic 1:**

**Is the use of technology necessary for the elderly UK population or an older person's life?**

**Student name:** Richard Oji

**Student ID:** 2013435

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**Lecturer name:** Dr. Laila Surani

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This supporting paper is a follow-up of a group debate, which will be exploring some of the key points highlighted in the debate by the opponent's views of the debate. I will be looking at our standpoint and others' views on the debate, reflecting on some information and statistics about the aging population. Government support or services and the impact of the coronavirus Covid 19 pandemic on older people.

**(Is the use of technology necessary for the elderly UK population or an older person's life?)**

**OUR STANDPOINT on the Above question is (AGAINST IT).**

Technology is changing our world, and its abilities allow us to achieve, enjoy and do some unimaginable things. However, it leads us to the following crucial self-unforgivable realistic doubts and questions such as;

- Is it really a good thing for our elderly?
- Does it bring us together or separate us, the elderly from our families?
- Is the elderly more alone and withdrawn from social ties?
- Is the elderly more connected to knowledge or made to believe misinformation?
- What about the health risks it poses to the elderly?

The reliance on technology definitely poses a greater challenge with numerous difficulties, considering its disadvantages to those who are unable to rely on technology, lack of access, inequalities in numerous aspects, barriers, cost, and obviously, weakening social ties alongside inclusion.

**Other views (opponents)**

Others views were in favour of technology and its importance to the elderly. Highlighting the potential benefits of using technology to provide remote access to services, well-being, loneliness, and social isolation. Nevertheless, we are of the belief and certainty that only a hand full of elderly people benefit from these technological advantages due to the above-mentioned adversities. Elderly people are more secure within their known environment of reality, rather than a world of fear, confusion, and complexity, which leads to significant health issues.

### **Reflecting on the information provided during the group debate.**

The use of technology has been linked to a number of health-related problems, ranging from psychological effects such as depression and anxiety to physical health effects, sleeping problems, and reduced physical activity.

One of the advanced technology benefits mentioned by the opponent (other Views) was

**Elli Q** is a proactive voice-operated care companion device designed to empower independence and support seniors in taking control of their social, mental, and physical well-being. Nevertheless, we strongly and certainly disagree that technology device has greater companionship than human companionship.

Human companionship is an essential need for a sense of acceptance and belonging, fundamental in keeping body and mind active which prevents social isolation. A real human conversational engagement transmits feelings that encourage mental stimulation and positive thoughts, with reminiscing memories (The Importance of Companionship).

Approximately 1.2 million lonely elderly people living in the UK, which is set to reach 2 million by 2025 ("The Importance of Companionship") and according to Age UK, half a million older people don't speak, see or interact with another person 5-6 days a week (Age UK).

Technology compulsion leads to reflection on online activities and relationships, which takes over personal relationships leading to an increase in loneliness and disconnection with an adverse effect on elderly people well – being.

**The coronavirus Covid 19 pandemic** which lead to an increase in the global use of technology among elderly people, was another main point outlined by (others view).

The older generation has ever shown resistance and uncomfortable with the computerisation life (McDonough) even as numerous technological devices helped to sustain the challenging period, the question still remains, how healthy are they? Technological device usage has been linked to a decline in cognitive, real-life social isolation and a decline in mental health positive outcomes.

## Statistics

According to Age UK, approximately 2 million elderly people aged 75 and above in England are still digitally illiterate, making it difficult to use or access technological devices (AgeUK).

Despite the recent myth and claims made by (others view) that the coronavirus Covid 19 pandemic has forced a majority of elderly online and calling for other non-users to join the race is incorrect. The charity calls for higher support for those offline and others with extreme difficulties accessing potential goods and services via digital technology.

It has proven difficult and expensive over the years of extensive work to encourage and support elderly people to gain confidence and improve their digital skills.

- About 33% of those who were not using email in 2018/19, did so in 2020.
- 9% who did, stopped in 2020.
- 15% who were not managing their finances online in 2018/19, did so in 2020.
- 19% who did so, stopped in 2020.
- 30% who did not use online shopping in 2018/19, did so in 2020.
- 21% who shopped online, stopped in 2020.
- 19% who looked for health information online in 2018/19, did so in 2020.
- Amazingly, 59% who looked for health information online in 2018/19 stopped in 2020.

These statistics clearly show that the **use of technology is not necessary for the elderly UK population**, as not everyone who goes online accepts it or stayed, and approximately, 320,000 elderly people in the UK who used the internet in 2019, had stopped.

Going by the above statistics, the Charity urged that digital technology necessity should not be made mandatory or exclude people (ELDERLY) who are technologically literate or do not wish to. People should be free to manage their life, access information, and public service their preferred suitability.

## Support and Services

- Age UK
- NHS England
- TV license concessions
- Council tax support
- Public transport
- Heating benefits
- Housing benefit

## Covid 19 pandemic

Coronavirus Covid 19 pandemic had a devastating effect on elderly people, affecting their mental and physical health the most. As a vulnerable group, asked to isolate in their own homes, the reality of panic and uncertainty, leads to mental and physical illness.

Physical health was mainly an issue due to reduced mobility, undergoing weak muscles, and joint aches, causing daily activities and home chores impossible as independent elderly people became dependent, relying on walking aid, gaining weight, and unsteady standing due to lack of physical activities.

Their mental health, emotional well-being, and age vulnerability lead to anxiety, stress, and depression as they felt trapped, and deserted in their own homes with no visitors.

Elderly people suffering from long-term health conditions were affected the most and one of the government-relevant services, includes

- Covid-19 vaccination services
- Covid-19 free testing with Kits
- NHS Covid Pass
- Research and 111 call centers (COVID-19 Services)

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