



Education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building

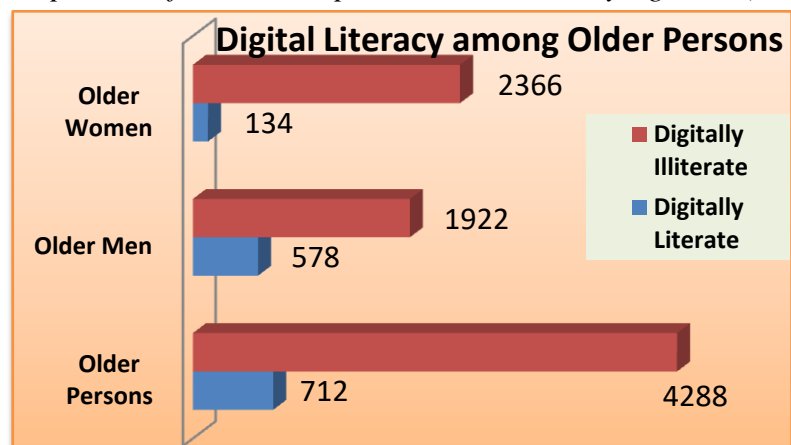
Education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building play an important role in overall development of any human being throughout their life. It contributes to independent living and holistic well-being at all stages. In today's world not using technology, to a certain extent, disables access to information and shared knowledge. Some old people who experience lack of affinity towards technology and its systems, experience loneliness and feel marginalized.

As empathetic individuals, old people very naturally open up to innovative training and skill development initiatives. To ensure active ageing in society it is inevitable to include the old people in mainstream of the society. Due to complex emotional, mental as well as physical process, the rapid changes in the surroundings make ageing more difficult than it appears.

Need for Digital literacy among Old People in India: Some salient features

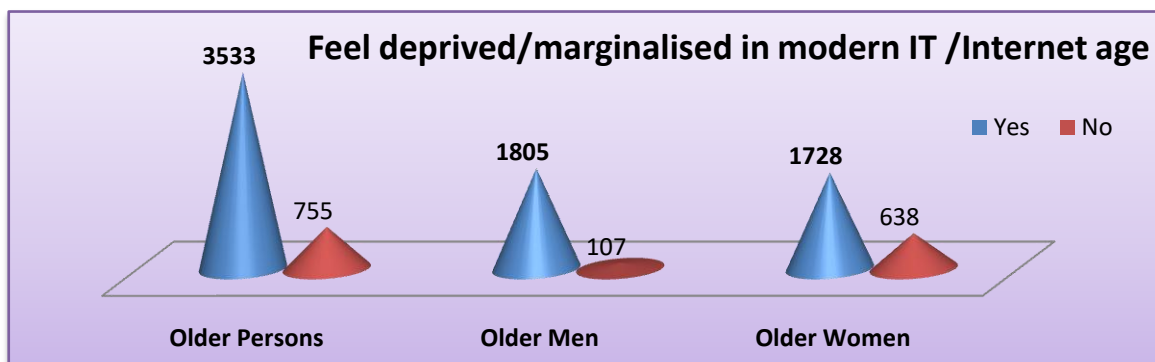
(Based on a recent survey among a sample size of 5000 older persons, conducted by Agewell*)

- 85% elderly (76.5% elderly men & 95% elderly women) are digitally and computer illiterate in India.
- 75% digitally illiterate respondents said that lack of computer skills and digital illiteracy is affecting their life in old age adversely.



Source: Agewell Foundation

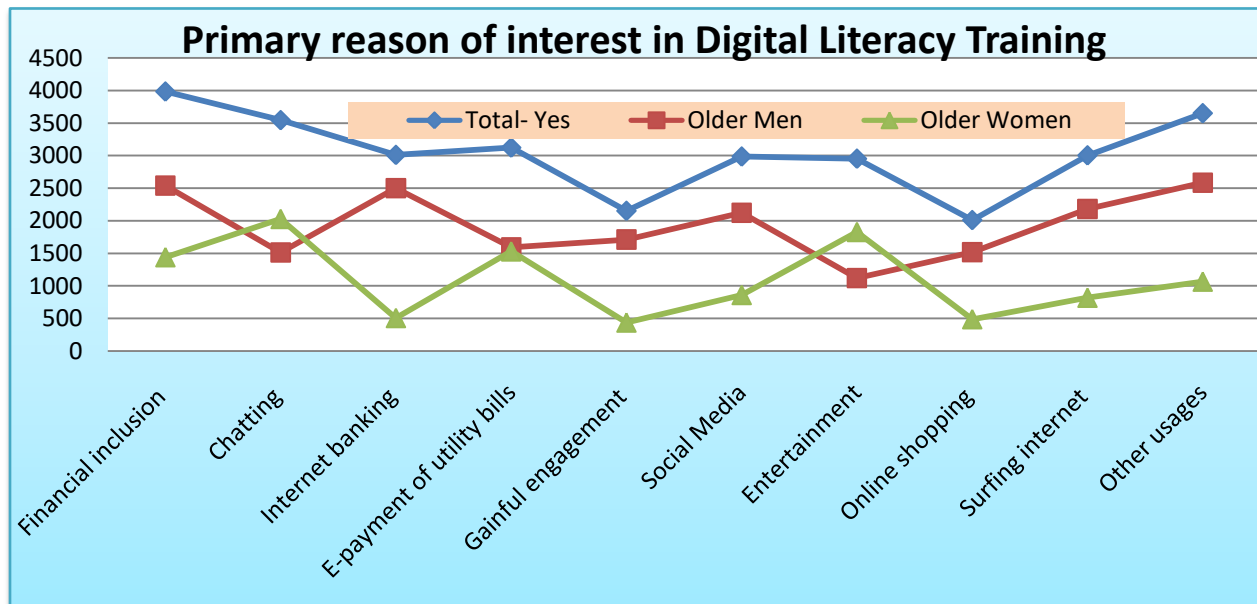
- 82% digitally illiterate elderly claimed that they consider themselves as marginalized in new settings, which is governed by modern IT and internet.



Source: Agewell Foundation



- 85% respondents grumbled that their younger family members avoid communicating with them due to their relatively more demanding lifestyle and inability of older family members to understand the modern digital language of communication.
- 51% elderly claimed that there are hardly any facilities where they can learn computer applications and get digital training. Another 44.6% claimed that they have no idea about that.



Source: Agewell Foundation

Education, training and life-long learning help elderly to adapt themselves in changed circumstances, to improve cognitive strength, and to enable them to utilize useful products and services, that they need in old age.

Training of soft skills must aim at to stimulate their brain networks / functions. Such initiatives can help elderly to forget about the insecurities or loneliness that they otherwise experience.

For integration of technology in the lives of old people, there is a need to -

- Teach old people how to use latest technological devices to keep them independent and updated.
- Provide old people with assistive products to address issues like security, mobility, emergency alerts, tracking, or mere boredom.
- Make them competent enough to get gainful jobs around their houses
- Keep them engaged and active in old age
- Help them get respected as knowledgeable and update person in society



Courtesy: Agewell Foundation



Most digitally literate old people experience improved state of mind, active and healthy lifestyle, desire to re-connect with people they care for and activities they enjoy. Moreover, getting an opportunity to interact with new like-minded friends and using technology bring positive changes in their lives.

Today, most people in their 60s and 70s are physically fit and employable.

They often feel the need to continue working, even after retirement, to ensure their economic independence and good quality of life. Needless to say, access to new forms of literacy, and lifelong learning, adapted as needed to changing cognitive capacities in old age also facilitates old people's participation in societal development and enjoyment of cultural life.**

Modern technological know-how and new age skills play crucial role in improving poor living conditions and infrastructure and eradicating poverty. In India where pensions, disability insurance, health benefits, and savings become almost worthless due to rising inflation rates, every retired and old person need to remain engaged in some gainful occupation.

Lifelong learning has been an integral part of Indian culture. The ancient Indian religious tradition and culture have accorded prime importance to the acquisition of knowledge and upheld the virtues of learning. Despite the gradual modernization of society and the emergence of multiple channels of learning, the first formal recognition of lifelong learning came in 1966 when the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) made the observation that - *Education does not end with schooling, but is a lifelong process. The elderly needs an understanding of the rapidly changing world and the growing complexities of society. Even those who had the most sophisticated education must continue to learn.*

The process of developing the policy framework of lifelong learning has been rather slow in India and seems to be linked to external stimulus. Currently lifelong learning is often used as an umbrella term to cover basic literacy, post literacy, continuing education and extension programs of different organizations, refresher/continuing courses of professional bodies, private institutions and business houses; but not conceived as an overarching framework of learning. For older persons there are almost no lifelong programs being conceived /implemented in India at governmental as well as non-governmental level.

In today's changed socio-economic scenario, skill development training, lifelong learning and capacity-building training programs have become most urgent priorities to address ever increasing concerns of fast growing community of older persons.

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* Agewell Foundation has already provided Digital Literacy to over 25000 old people in last four years.

** As a Free Service for Old People Agewell Employment Exchange for Retired Old People has already assisted over 70000 people in getting jobs

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EXPERIENCE...
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Every retired person can become a tutor or an accountant to take up assignments within the locality.
Parents, entrepreneurs and older persons ... all are invited for registration.
(Agewell Foundation only facilitates interaction at no cost)

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