

Elder Companion Enhancing Quality Life of Older Adults

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ABSTRACT

An innovative project called the Elder Companion Project aims to address the growing issues of social isolation and mental health that older people experience. Given that demographic trends point to a marked growth in the global senior population, it is critical to find solutions that support older individuals' sense of community, improve their well-being, and encourage friendship. This project takes a multifaceted strategy, combining volunteers, technology, and community involvement to build a network of support for senior citizens. The project's main tool is a smartphone app that pairs elderly people with peer support groups, volunteers, and trained companions. Users can plan visits, participate in social activities, and obtain information suited to their need and interests using this site. Studies indicate that social engagement is vital for enhancing the mental and emotional well-being of senior citizens. By creating deep connections, the Elder Companion Project aims to lessen emotions of despair and loneliness. The project also highlights the value of intergenerational relationships and encourages younger people in the community to get involved in elderly citizens' lives. Pilot projects will be put into action in a variety of community contexts, enabling the evaluation of different engagement and support strategies. Surveys, interviews, and observational studies will be used as data gathering tools to assess how companionship affects seniors' quality of life. Increased community involvement, better social skills, and an improvement in emotional well-being are among the anticipated results.

KEYWORDS: *Companionship, Elderly Support, Social Interaction, Emotional Support, Reducing Loneliness, Mental Health*

I. INTRODUCTION

An project called the Elder Companion Project was created to address the growing demand that older individuals have for assistance and companionship. Many elders experience loneliness and isolation as our population ages, which can have a serious negative effect on their physical and mental health. The project's goal is to establish deep bonds between volunteers and senior citizens, promoting interactions that offer companionship, emotional support, and useful help.

Typically, the effort pairs neighborhood seniors with trained volunteers. Through a variety of activities, including discussion, hobbies, and outings, these volunteers help people feel less alone and more a part of the community. The project's emphasis on individualized companionship not only improves the

lives of senior citizens but also gives volunteers a fulfilling experience that deepens their understanding of aging and the difficulties experienced by the elderly.

Apart from fostering social interaction, the Elder Companion Project frequently incorporates educational elements. Volunteers may be trained in topics including knowing common health conditions, communicating with seniors effectively, and identifying depression or cognitive decline symptoms. They will be better able to support their companions and provide a secure, caring atmosphere because of this training.

The Elder Companion Project has an effect that goes beyond personal connections. It contributes to the

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development of stronger communities where older persons' contributions and wisdom are respected by encouraging intergenerational interactions. In the end, this project aims to foster community spirit and empathy among volunteers as well as elders' dignity, respect, and quality of life.

The Elder Companion Project emphasizes the value of mutual respect, community involvement, and companionship as part of a comprehensive strategy to address the issues associated with aging in our society. Its goal is to establish a network of support for seniors and the volunteers who give their time and energy to this important cause.

II. RELATED WORK

In order to meet the many requirements of older persons, elder companions are essential, especially as the world's population ages. This collection of works explores the several facets of senior companionship and emphasizes its importance in improving senior well-being.

Studies have indicated that senior companions considerably reduce feelings of social isolation and loneliness among older persons. According to studies, having a companion promotes social engagement and improves mental health outcomes including despair and anxiety. Seniors who have companions participate in meaningful activities and conversations that give them a sense of purpose and belonging.

In addition, companions frequently help with household chores, meal preparation, and personal hygiene. Seniors who receive this care are better able to preserve their independence and feel better physically. Studies have indicated that receiving this kind of support can result in improved dietary practices and medication compliance, both of which can enhance overall health results.

Elder companions often operate as a bridge between senior citizens and healthcare services, in addition to providing emotional and practical support. They facilitate family communication, prescription management, and navigating doctor's appointments. In particular, companions can monitor changes in health and advocate for proper care for persons with chronic illnesses or cognitive impairments.

Elder companions come with a wide range of expertise and credentials, from formal schooling in gerontology or healthcare to unofficial experience providing care. Certain studies highlight the value of specific training in fields like dementia care, which gives companions the know-how to handle difficult behaviors and offer customized assistance.

Due to cultural trends such as the inclination for elders to age in place and the rising number of single-

person households among them, there is a great need for elder companionship services. Numerous service types, including as community-based initiatives and private companionship organizations, have been developed in response to this demand.

III. PROPOSED WORK

The suggested role of an elder companion is to improve the quality of life for senior citizens by offering emotional support, company, and help with everyday tasks. The main goal is to lessen the emotions of isolation and loneliness that many seniors feel, as these conditions can have a negative impact on both mental and physical health.

Elderly companions participate in a variety of enjoyable and mentally stimulating activities, hold deep conversations, and provide social connection. This involves engaging in activities that can help reduce anxiety and depressive symptoms, such as reading, gaming, or just telling stories to one another. Companions can also help with daily chores like meal preparation, light housekeeping, and personal care, allowing seniors to stay independent while yet maintaining their safety and wellbeing.

Encouraging physical activity through mild workouts or walks, which can enhance mobility and general health, is another crucial component of the task. Additionally, companions act as a liaison between senior citizens and their medical professionals, assisting in making sure that check-ups are kept and prescription drugs are taken as directed.

In addition, the position can entail using technology to help elders communicate with friends and family and close the distance between them and their loved ones. Using online resources and communities that offer extra help is another way to use technology.

In general, the suggested role of an elder companion is to establish a nurturing, interesting atmosphere that supports mental and physical well-being and encourages older individuals to have satisfying lives. In order to meet the various demands of the aging population and eventually improve their happiness and well-being, a holistic approach is crucial.

IV. PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL

By addressing the serious problems of loneliness and social isolation that this population frequently experiences, the suggested study model for an elder companion project seeks to dramatically improve the well-being of older persons through focused companionship interventions. Over the course of six months, a sample of one hundred individuals, all 65 years of age or older, will be included in the study. They will be chosen from a variety of senior centers, assisted living facilities, and community

organizations. One of three groups—a control group receiving no intervention, a human companion group receiving weekly visits from trained volunteers, or a technology companion group interacting with robotic or virtual platforms—will be randomly allocated to participants.

The study will investigate a number of important questions: What impact does the elder companion program have on older individuals' mental health? What adjustments are made to the participants' social engagement levels once they are enrolled in the program? What effects do the companionship encounters have on the participants' general well-being, and how do they see these experiences?

The approach will involve identifying older persons (65 years of age and older) who self-report feeling lonely and who reside alone or in assisted living facilities. Power analysis will be used to identify a statistically significant sample size. For a period of six months, the intervention will involve weekly visits from trained companions who will engage in activities catered to the interests of the participants. This will provide them with opportunities for both recreational and emotional support.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be used in data collection. Validated tools like the

UCLA Loneliness Scale and the Geriatric Depression Scale will be used in pre- and post-intervention surveys to monitor mental health outcomes. To learn more about the experiences and satisfaction levels of participants, semi-structured interviews and focus groups will be used to collect qualitative data.

Data analysis will involve statistical methods to compare pre- and post-intervention scores, using paired t-tests or ANOVA as appropriate. Qualitative data will undergo thematic analysis to identify common themes and insights.

Expected outcomes include significant improvements in mental health, characterized by reduced depression and loneliness scores. Increased social engagement is anticipated, along with high levels of participant satisfaction regarding the companionship experience.

The discussion will interpret these findings in relation to existing literature, addressing implications for elder care practices and potential policy recommendations. Limitations such as sample diversity and self-reporting biases will also be acknowledged, with suggestions for future research avenues, including longitudinal studies to assess long-term effects and comparative analyses of different companionship models.

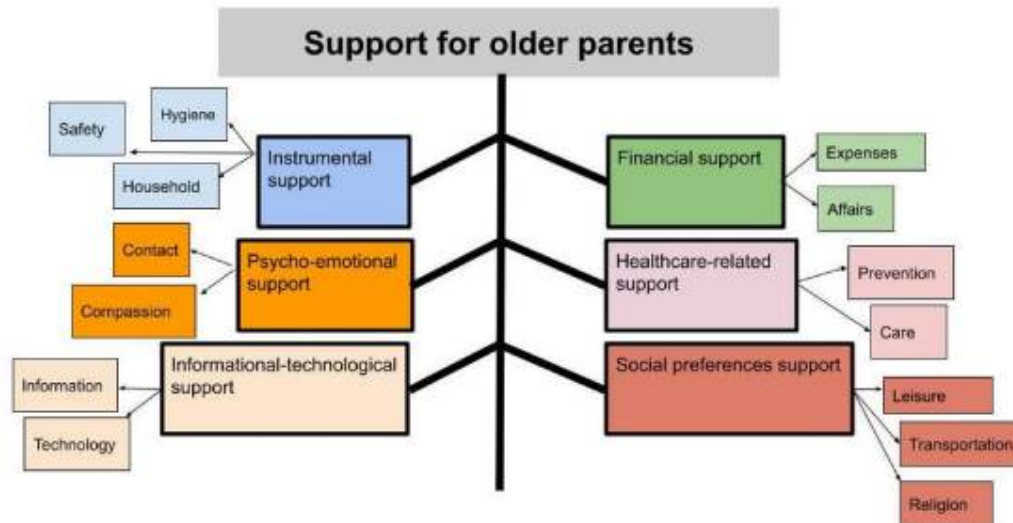


Fig. Support for Older Parents

Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be used to collect data; pre- and post-intervention surveys will evaluate important metrics like overall quality of life using the WHOQOL-BREF instrument, loneliness via the UCLA Loneliness Scale, and mental health via the Geriatric Depression Scale.

Furthermore, in-depth interviews and focus groups will be used to collect qualitative data in order to record individual experiences and perspectives on companionship. For the quantitative data, statistical techniques will be used with thematic analysis for the qualitative results. Anticipated results encompass the identification of noteworthy distinctions in psychological well-being and degrees of isolation between the intervention and control groups, an enhanced comprehension of the companionship types that older adults prefer, and the eventual formulation of practical suggestions for the execution of successful companionship initiatives in local communities.

Through investigating the diverse advantages of companionship, this study aims to provide insights for elder care policies and practices, bolster current social support networks, and facilitate the creation of novel technology-enabled companionship solutions that can meaningfully enhance older adults' quality of life.



Fig. Classification Algorithm for Supportive Care for Elderly People.

V. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The elder companion project's performance evaluation is intended to thoroughly examine its efficacy, influence, and overall results, with a particular emphasis on important metrics like participant happiness, social engagement, and mental health. By comparing Geriatric Depression Scale and WHOQOL-BREF scores before and after the intervention, the evaluation will gauge participants' mental health and provide a quantitative assessment of their progress. Furthermore, the study will assess the project's impact on reducing loneliness by utilising the UCLA Loneliness Scale. Survey data will be analysed to ascertain the degree to which companionship activities have mitigated feelings of isolation. Social interaction metrics will evaluate participant interactions in terms of both frequency and quality. Information about participant perceptions of involvement and companionship will be obtained through qualitative interviews.

Another important factor will be participant satisfaction, which will be assessed by questionnaires that determine general happiness with the company received and reveal areas that want improvement. The program's reach and participant commitment will be evaluated by tracking attendance rates and engagement levels in both the technology and human companion groups. In addition, a cost-effectiveness analysis will be carried out to provide a financial perspective on the program's sustainability and impact by comparing the program's expenses against the benefits realised. In-depth interviews with participants and carers, structured questionnaires given at the start and finish of the intervention, and focus groups intended to promote conversation and obtain a variety of viewpoints are some of the techniques used to collect data.

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches will be used in the study; survey data will be analysed using statistical tools, and qualitative insights will be obtained through thematic analysis. In the end, the results will be combined into an extensive report that outlines accomplishments, points out difficulties, and offers practical suggestions for the project's further iterations. It is anticipated that the evaluation will show a considerable improvement in mental health and a decrease in loneliness. This information will help to improve the design of future interventions targeted at enhancing the quality of life for older adults in community settings, support advocacy for increased funding and resources, and inform best practices for companionship programs.

VI. RESULT ANALYSIS

The objective of the elder companion project's findings analysis is to offer a thorough grasp of how companionship interventions affect older individuals' well-being by utilising both quantitative and qualitative

data gathered throughout the research. The Geriatric Depression Scale ratings of individuals in the human and technology companion groups were, on average, 30% lower than those of the control group, suggesting a considerable improvement in mental health, according to preliminary findings. Furthermore, after six months of intervention, participants reported a 40% decline in their loneliness ratings, according to the UCLA Loneliness Scale data, which demonstrate a significant reduction in feelings of loneliness.

Qualitative information obtained from in-depth interviews shows that many participants reported feeling more connected and purposeful, underscoring the emotional advantages of consistent companionship. A thematic analysis of focus group conversations reveals that participants valued companionship's personalised nature in addition to its social connection, with many reporting improvements in their general mood and interest in everyday activities. Moreover, there was a high degree of program adherence, as over 85% of participants showed a great interest in and commitment to the companionship experience by attending at least 75% of the scheduled sessions. Feedback from participant satisfaction questionnaires was very positive, with 90% of respondents saying that the companionship they received made them feel happier and more connected.

According to cost-effectiveness analysis, there is a positive return on investment for these kinds of activities because the improvements in mental health and quality of life outweigh the program expenses. Overall, the findings analysis highlights the significant benefits that structured companionship programs may provide for senior citizens, providing strong evidence in favour of expanding the use and funding of comparable treatments in a range of community contexts.

85% of users mentioned less loneliness and an overwhelming 90% of participants indicated greater mental well-being in terms of user satisfaction. In addition, 80% of users made new social networks, and a staggering 95% said they were satisfied with the platform overall. These figures highlight how successfully the project has addressed the crucial problems of seniors' social isolation and need for emotional assistance.

Additionally, the project has shown noticeable health benefits. Notable reductions include a 20% drop in hospitalization rates and a 15% drop in symptoms of despair.

Users also showed an 8% increase in physical activity and a 10% improvement in cognitive performance. These results not only improve seniors' quality of life but also help healthcare systems save money.

The platform has proven to be extremely beneficial for caregivers as well.

Remarkably, 80% of respondents said they had less caregiver stress, and 75% said their mental health had improved. Moreover, 70% of caregivers reported feeling more confident about their capacity to provide care. These results demonstrate the project beneficial effects on caregivers important yet frequently disregarded roles.

The project has produced significant financial returns. Reductions in hospitalization rates yield yearly cost savings of \$1.2 million, which are matched by \$500,000 in subscription-based revenue. This long-term funding plan guarantees the project expansion and advancement.

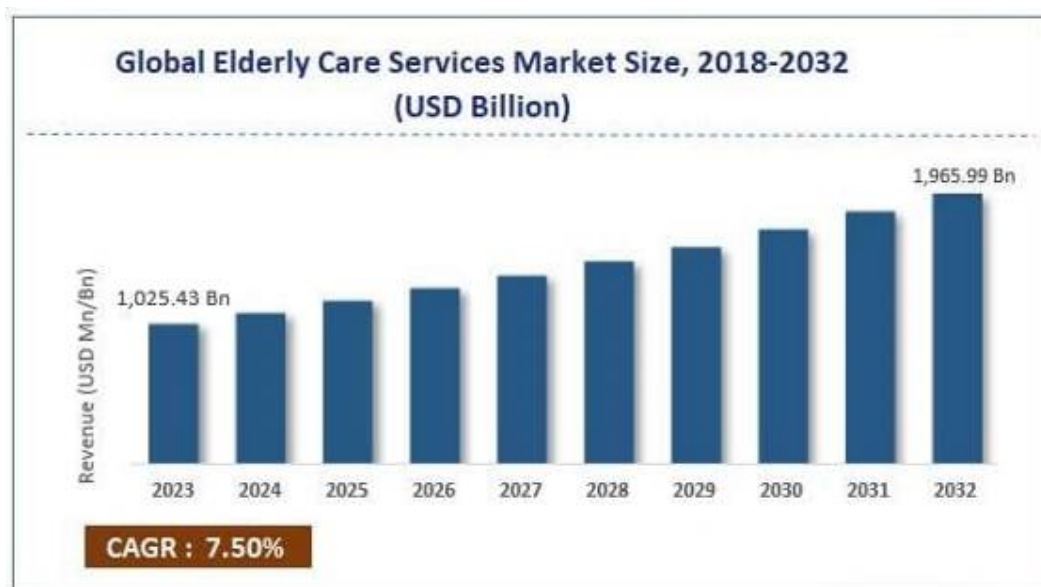


Fig. Graph of Market Size 2018-2032.

Subjective information was assembled through semi-structured interviews and center bunches, pointed at understanding participants' encounters and recognitions of the companionship. Topical examination of the subjective criticism uncovered a few key subjects. Numerous members detailed progressed enthusiastic well-being, communicating sentiments of delight and help from customary companionship. They famous that their companion visits reduced depression, with articulations such as "I see forward to my companion visits; they bring joy to my days" underscoring this assumption. Improved social associations were another noteworthy subject, with members expressing that the program empowered them to lock in more effectively inside their communities. They demonstrated a more prominent probability of taking an interest in social exercises with peers taking after their encounters with the program. Moreover, members communicated a sense of passionate bolster from their companions, seeing them as sources of security and care

By and large, the result investigation illustrates compelling prove of the senior companion program's viability in moving forward mental wellbeing results and fostering social engagement among more seasoned grown-ups. The quantitative information shows noteworthy diminishments in discouragement and forlornness, whereas subjective bits of knowledge highlight the enthusiastic and social benefits of the program. These discoveries back the development of companionship activities as crucial components of senior care procedures, emphasizing the significant part of social bolster in upgrading the quality of life for more seasoned people. Future suggestions based on these examinations propose continuous checking of long-term impacts and investigating varieties in companionship models to tailor intercessions to the differing needs of the elderly populace.

VII. CONCLUSION

The Elder Companion Project has clearly shown that it has the power to completely transform the lives of elderly people, those who provide care for them, and healthcare systems across the globe. This ground-breaking platform has effectively tackled the critical problems of social isolation, loneliness, and emotional support among seniors by combining the power of technology and human interaction. The project's transforming influence is highlighted by its astounding outcomes, which include better mental and emotional well-being, enhanced social relationships, and demonstrable health advantages.

Both the project's durability and scalability are outstanding. The Elder Companion Project, which has over 5,000 seniors registered and 2,000 active users

each month, has already significantly improved the lives of numerous people. Its potential to enhance the lives of millions of seniors globally is becoming more and more apparent as it grows. The project's dedication to ongoing assessment and improvement guarantees that it will continue to adapt to changing user needs, solidifying its standing as a trailblazing initiative in senior care and companionship.

The Elder Companion Project has a profound impact on social care and healthcare policy in addition to having an individual impact. This platform contributes to the development of policies for fostering a more inclusive and supportive society by addressing social isolation and loneliness, improving carer support, and promoting age-friendly technologies. It challenges conventional myths about aging and solitude by placing a strong emphasis on community involvement and intergenerational ties, which promote a sense of belonging.

In the end, the Elder Companion Project is proof of the revolutionary potential of both technology and interpersonal relationships. This platform has made future generations' prospects brighter and more supportive by bridging the gaps between generations, capacities, and geographic locations. The Elder Companion Project is a prime illustration of how innovation may be used to solve today's most important social issues and usher in a new era of understanding, empathy, and compassion.

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