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Innovaciones en trabajo social: Los blogueros de plata como estrategia mediática para reducir el aislamiento social entre las personas mayores

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Resumen. El estudio tiene como objetivo proponer el uso de blogueros sénior como estrategia mediática para reducir el aislamiento social entre las personas mayores. Para ello, se realizó un análisis comparativo de experiencias en Rusia, China y Kazajistán mediante una encuesta a expertos ($n=15$), grupos focales (12 grupos de 8 a 10 participantes cada uno) y una encuesta ($N=287$) que incorporó la Escala de Soledad de UCLA, la Escala de Alfabetización Digital e instrumentos diseñados por los autores. Se aplicaron métodos estadísticos no paramétricos junto con un análisis temático de los datos cualitativos. Se encontró una correlación negativa significativa entre la frecuencia de creación de contenido digital y el nivel de soledad ($\rho=-0,64$, $p<0,001$), que varió entre países: Rusia ($\rho=-0,58$), China ($\rho=-0,71$) y Kazajistán ($\rho=-0,43$). Se identificaron tres modelos distintos de inclusión digital: Rusia: un modelo gestionado institucionalmente, centrado en la autorrealización a través de programas estatales; China: un modelo orientado al mercado, caracterizado por la competencia natural entre los blogueros sénior; Kazajistán: modelo funcional básico que enfatiza la competencia digital para el acceso a los servicios públicos. Los creadores de contenido activos mostraron bajos niveles de soledad en el 64,4 % de los casos, en comparación con el 20,5 % entre los creadores ocasionales. La interacción intergeneracional se correlacionó positivamente con la calidad de los blogs ($\rho=0,69$, $p<0,001$), especialmente en el modelo chino (61 % de los casos con cocreación de contenido). La transición del consumo pasivo a la creación activa de contenido es un factor importante para reducir el aislamiento social y mejorar la satisfacción social entre las personas mayores. La efectividad de las estrategias de medios depende de su alineación con la etapa de inclusión digital y el contexto cultural e institucional, aspectos que deben considerarse al diseñar programas sociales para trabajar con adultos mayores.

Palabras clave: inclusión digital, interacción intergeneracional, alfabetización digital, niveles de soledad, medios digitales.

Innovations in social work: Silver bloggers as a media strategy to reduce social isolation among older people

Abstract. The study aims to propose the use of silver bloggers as a media strategy for reducing social isolation among older people. To attain this end, a comparative analysis of experiences in Russia, China, and Kazakhstan was conducted using expert survey (n=15), focus groups (12 groups of 8-10 participants each), and a questionnaire survey (N=287) incorporating the UCLA Loneliness Scale, the Digital Literacy Scale, and author-designed instruments. Non-parametric statistical methods along with thematic analysis of qualitative data were applied. A significant negative correlation was found between the frequency of digital content creation and the level of loneliness ($\rho=-0.64$, $p<0.001$), varying across countries: Russia ($\rho=-0.58$), China ($\rho=-0.71$), and Kazakhstan ($\rho=-0.43$). Three distinct models of digital inclusion were identified: Russia – institutionally managed model focused on self-realization through state programs; China – market-oriented model characterized by natural competition among granfluencers; Kazakhstan – basic functional model emphasizing digital competence for accessing public services. Active content creators showed low levels of loneliness in 64.4% of cases, compared with 20.5% among infrequent creators. Intergenerational interaction was positively correlated with the quality of blogging ($\rho=0.69$, $p<0.001$), most prominently in the Chinese model (61% of cases involving co-creation of content). The transition from passive consumption to active content creation is an important factor in reducing social isolation and enhancing social satisfaction among older people. The effectiveness of media strategies depends on their alignment with the stage of digital inclusion and the cultural-institutional context, which should be considered when designing social programs for working with senior adults.

Keywords: digital inclusion, digital media, intergenerational interaction, digital literacy, loneliness levels.

INTRODUCTION

Demographic changes in the modern world are characterized by a significant increase in the share of older people in the population structure, creating new challenges for social well-being. According to the United Nations, by 2050, the number of people over 60 will reach 2.1 billion worldwide (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2019). Population aging poses serious challenges for national social security systems and for professional social work (Chistyakov & Yastrebova, 2024; Isaakov & Oshmarin, 2024). The growing number of elderly citizens is accompanied by an increased burden on social services, a shortage of qualified specialists working with older people, and the need to develop innovative approaches to the provision of social services (Begishev et al., 2024; Frumina & Galanov, 2024; World Health Organization, 2025). Traditional models of social care, focused mainly on providing material assistance and basic care, are proving insufficient to meet the needs of modern seniors for social activity, self-realization, and maintaining quality of life (Polezhaeva, 2024). Under these conditions, the search for resource-efficient and scalable technologies of social work becomes especially

important as they can ensure the social integration of older people while making optimal use of the professional and financial resources of social services.

The social isolation of older people is a serious problem associated with the deterioration of physical and mental health, a decrease in quality of life, and increased mortality (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015). Traditional forms of social support, such as family ties and local communities, often prove insufficient under the conditions of urbanization and changes in family structure (Panova et al., 2025).

At the same time, there is a rapid digitalization of social relations, which can both promote the social integration of older people and exacerbate their isolation in the absence of appropriate skills and support (Pavlova, 2024; Zharova, 2024). Mechanisms for reducing social isolation through digital participation have been analyzed in several studies. Chang et al. (2023) found that digital storytelling interventions contribute to improved mental health and social connections among older people. In this context, digital technologies and social media can provide new opportunities for maintaining social connections and active participation of senior people in public life (Smolin & Palchikova, 2024). Collective blogging creates social spaces that reduce isolation and help develop digital skills (Olsson, 2020).

The phenomenon of silver bloggers (older adults who actively create content in digital media) has developed in Asian countries, especially in China. This phenomenon is characterized not only by self-expression among senior people but also by the creation of new forms of social interaction, including intergenerational dialogue and the sharing of experience. Silver bloggers use various digital platforms for blogging, producing video content, participating in social projects, and organizing joint events.

The research problem lies in the insufficient understanding of the mechanisms through which digital blogging affects the social well-being of older people from the perspective of social work theory and practice (Markheim & Lukyanova, 2023; Aziyev et al., 2024). The lack of scientifically grounded data on how participation in digital content creation helps overcome social isolation hinders the development of effective social technologies for senior adults and the formation of professional competences among specialists in this field (Suiunalieva et al., 2024). Understanding these mechanisms is critically important for developing innovative methods of social work, designing professional development programs for social workers (Nikolaeva et al., 2023; Akhmetshin et al., 2025), and creating evidence-based recommendations for social service organizations (Shebzukhova et al., 2023; Shichkin et al., 2024). Despite the growing interest in the digital inclusion of seniors, a comprehensive comparative analysis of the silver blogger phenomenon as a professional tool for reducing social isolation in social work remains limited, which prevents its integration into the public social service system.

The objective of this study is to analyze the role of silver bloggers as a media strategy for supporting older people in the context of reducing social isolation and developing intergenerational connections, based on a comparative analysis of experiences in Russia, China, and Kazakhstan.

Research questions are as follows:

- 1) How does participation in digital blogging affect the level of social isolation among older people?
- 2) Which media strategies are most effective for engaging older people in digital content creation?

- 3) How does blogging contribute to the development of intergenerational interaction and the sharing of experience?
- 4) What are the cultural and institutional differences in the development of the silver blogger phenomenon in different countries, and how can this help in designing social programs for older people?

The structure of the article includes a literature overview on the digital inclusion of older people and intergenerational interaction, a description of the mixed research methodology, the presentation of data analysis results from three countries, and a discussion of the findings in the context of existing theoretical approaches and practical implications for developing support programs for seniors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on the digital participation of older people over the past decade show a significant shift from viewing this group as passive technology consumers to recognizing their active role in digital content creation. Celdrán et al. (2022) demonstrated that blogging among senior adults provides substantial relational benefits, including reduced isolation, cognitive stimulation, and strengthened identity. These findings are supported by the research of Brewer and Piper (2016), who documented cases of online content creation and dissemination among older bloggers, highlighting the importance of self-expression and social interaction. Olsson (2020) complemented it with an analysis of the prerequisites for digital engagement among senior adults, identifying creative self-expression as a key factor in expanding social connections.

Research has documented the diversity of digital activities among older bloggers, extending beyond traditional text blogging. Harley and Fitzpatrick (2009), using the example of the well-known YouTube blogger *geriatric1927*, demonstrated the potential of video blogging for intergenerational communication and the overcoming of age-related stereotypes. Durocher and Gauthier (2018) analyzed the phenomenon of thematic blogs created by senior adults, using a cooking blog as an example and interpreting it as a form of political expression and social participation. Hausknecht et al. (2019) studied the use of digital storytelling for preserving and transmitting the life experiences of older people, emphasizing the importance of this practice for maintaining intergenerational connectedness. These studies show that silver bloggers use multiple digital formats, from text blogs and video content to participation in social projects and the organization of joint online events, which requires a differentiated approach when designing programs to support digital participation in social work.

Cultural aspects of digital participation among seniors are highlighted in the studies by Ansie and Mbamba (2024), who examined culturally grounded digital storytelling interventions, and by Hu, who analyzed intergenerational digital contact during the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe (Hu, 2024; Vlasova, 2024).

Chinese studies demonstrate a more pronounced silver blogger phenomenon, reflected in the rapid growth of older internet users and their increasing activity on social media (Yang et al., 2022). Digital engagement shows a positive correlation with subjective well-being through mechanisms of socialization and the expansion of social circles. Liu and Li (2024) further de-

veloped this topic by analyzing the relationship between digital participation and mental health among older people in China, confirming the therapeutic potential of blogging. The granfluencers phenomenon has evolved organically within the context of the silver economy, where older bloggers such as Grandma Lin and Aunt Su Min use personal narratives to build intergenerational audiences and monetize their authenticity. This approach directly challenges age stereotypes and demonstrates the commercial value of senior adults as active participants in the digital space (Otrokov et al., 2023).

In Kazakhstan, research is predominantly applicable. Programs such as Digital Kazakhstan and the Centers for Active Longevity prioritize functional digital literacy over creative self-expression, which is reflected in the absence of a noticeable silver blogger trend in the country.

In Russia, scientific research on digital participation among older adults remains limited. At the practical level, state-run digital literacy programs such as Internet Alphabet and social work programs for older people are being developed. An example of an innovative approach is the Moscow Longevity project, which offers a variety of online activities for citizens over 55, including training in digital technologies, blogging, and participation in various forms of digital engagement (Moscow Government, n.d.). Despite the localized nature of such initiatives and the lack of systematic scientific analysis, they have the potential for integrating digital participation into social work (Turgaev & Turgaeva, 2024). However, systematic studies on the effectiveness of these programs in reducing social isolation and promoting silver blogging are insufficient, highlighting the relevance of the present study.

Understanding the barriers and factors that facilitate senior participation in digital creativity is critically important for developing effective social practices (Grudtsina et al., 2025). Reuter et al. (2021) systematized older adults' preferences for collaborative content creation and the need for community support, while Thege et al. (2019) identified technological anxiety and digital inequality as major obstacles. Other authors (Hladek et al., 2024; Okhremenko et al., 2024) proposed a value-oriented approach to bridging the digital divide. From the perspective of social work, the issue of universal support mechanisms is particularly important as they must be applicable to a heterogeneous group of older adults with diverse life experiences, capacities, socio-economic conditions, and cultural contexts (Pashkurov et al., 2025). A comparative analysis of experiences across different countries allows for the identification of both general patterns and culturally specific success factors (Pashkurov et al., 2025), which is necessary for adapting social work technologies to local conditions. Combating ageism and increasing the visibility of older adults in digital spaces are also important directions for social work (McGrath, 2018; Goonasekera & Goonasekera, 2024).

Despite a significant number of studies, substantial gaps remain in the literature, hindering the development of evidence-based social practices for older adults. First, there is a lack of comparative research analyzing cultural and institutional differences in the development of digital participation among older people, which complicates the adaptation of international experience to local social services. Second, few studies use mixed methods to assess the effectiveness of various media strategies in terms of their applicability to social service and their scalability. Third, the long-term effects of blogging participation on social well-being and intergenerational relationships are insufficiently studied, which is necessary to justify investment in digital inclusion programs as a social work approach for older adults.

METHODS

Research design

The study employs mixed methods that combine qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of the silver blogger phenomenon. The selection of a mixed approach is driven by the need to examine participants' subjective experiences while also obtaining statistically significant data on the impact of digital blogging on the social well-being of older people.

The comparative analysis of Russia, China, and Kazakhstan is particularly important as these countries represent fundamentally different models of digital inclusion for senior adults: an institutional “top-down” model focused on state programs (Russia); a market-oriented “bottom-up” model with the organic development of granfluencers (China); and a basic functional model emphasizing access to public services (Kazakhstan). This diversity allows us to trace different trajectories from basic digital literacy to active content creation and to identify both universal and culturally specific success factors relevant to social work.

Participants and sampling procedure

The total sample consisted of 287 respondents distributed across three countries: Russia (n=98), China (n=102), and Kazakhstan (n=87). The average age of participants was 67.3 years (SD=5.8). The gender distribution was relatively balanced (62% women). Most respondents lived in urban areas (78%) and had higher education (54%). The samples across countries were comparable in terms of key demographic characteristics.

Selection criteria: age 60 or older, experience in digital content creation for at least six months, and the ability to participate independently. Individuals with cognitive impairments or without internet access were excluded.

Recruitment procedure. The participants were selected separately for each data collection method.

Expert survey. Experts (n=15, five from each country) were selected based on the following criteria: at least five years of professional experience working with older people in the field of digital inclusion; participation in the development or implementation of digital literacy programs for senior adults; and the presence of scientific publications or practical work on the research topic. The distribution of experts by country and professional category is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Expert sample by country and professional category.

Expert category	Russia (n=5)	China (n=5)	Kazakhstan (n=5)
Government programs/coordinators	2	-	2
Social services/active ageing centers	2	-	2
Platform developers/digital transformation specialists	-	2	1
Silver economy specialists	-	2	-
Academic researchers	1	1	-

Focus groups. Participants for the focus groups (12 groups of 8-10 people) were selected based on the general study criteria (age 60+, at least six months of digital content creation experience), ensuring heterogeneity in terms of digital literacy levels and types of platforms used. Recruitment was conducted through social service centers, online silver blogger communities, and educational programs for senior adults. Four focus groups were held in each country. Moderation was conducted in the participants' native language by trained facilitators who had experience working with older people.

Survey. The recruitment procedure for the quantitative survey (N=287) involved targeted sampling through social service centers, libraries, and online silver blogger communities, supplemented by a snowball method (each participant could recommend no more than two individuals meeting the inclusion criteria). The response rate was 73%.

Data collection instruments

TABLE 2. Research methods and instruments.

Methods	Participants	Instruments	Reliability indicators
Expert survey	15 experts (five from each country)	Structured questionnaire (25 questions)	-
Focus groups	12 groups (8-10 people each)	Semi-structured interview (90-120 min)	$\kappa=0.78$
Snowball sampling	287 respondents	UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, 1996)	$\alpha=0.89$
		Digital Literacy Scale (Ng, 2012)	$\alpha=0.82$
		Original questionnaire "The Digital Blogging Experience"*	$\alpha=0.84$

Note: *The Digital Blogging Experience Questionnaire was developed by the authors based on existing theoretical models and validated in a pilot study (n=45).

Research procedure and ethical considerations

The study was conducted from March to September 2024 and included three consecutive stages (Table 3).

TABLE 3. Stages of the study and applied methods.

Stages	Period	Data collection methods	Procedures	Participants
1. Preparatory	March-April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert interviews • Pilot survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and validation of tools • Expert evaluation of programs • Questionnaire testing (n=45) • Back-translation and cultural adaptation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 experts (5 from each country) • 45 respondents in the pilot study

TABLE 3. CONTINUATION

Stages	Period	Data collection methods	Procedures	Participants
2. Primary data collection	May-July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative surveys via online and offline channels • Conducting 12 focus groups • Audio recording and transcription of focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 287 survey respondents • 96-120 focus group participants
3. Processing and verification	August-September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional follow-up interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative data analysis • Qualitative analysis of transcripts • Follow-up interviews to validate interpretations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 participants in follow-up interviews

Ethical principles were followed in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee (Protocol No. 2024-03). All the participants provided informed consent.

Data analysis methods

The quantitative analysis employed non-parametric methods: descriptive statistics (median, quartiles), the Kruskal-Wallis test for group comparisons, the Mann-Whitney test for pairwise comparisons, Spearman’s correlation coefficient, and the chi-square test for categorical variables. To analyze the relationship between the type of digital activity and loneliness levels, respondents were divided into three groups based on content creation frequency (active creators: >4 times/week; moderate creators: 2-4 times/week; occasional creators: <2 times/week) and three categories of loneliness according to the normative UCLA Loneliness Scale (low: <36 points; moderate: 36-44 points; high: >44 points).

The qualitative analysis used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), including transcription, coding, theme development, and verification procedures. Intercoder reliability was $\kappa=0.78$.

RESULTS

Table 4 presents the main tendencies and variability indicators of the research variables across the three countries. The median and quartiles were selected as measures of the main tendency and dispersion due to the non-parametric nature of the data.

The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed statistically significant differences between the countries across all measures ($p<0.001$).

Spearman’s correlation analysis showed significant negative relationships between content creation frequency and loneliness levels in the overall sample ($\rho=-0.64$, $p<0.001$). The strength of the relationship varied by country: Russia ($\rho=-0.58$, $p<0.001$), China ($\rho=-0.71$, $p<0.001$), and Kazakhstan ($\rho=-0.43$, $p<0.01$).

TABLE 4. Key indicators of digital engagement and social well-being.

Indicator	Russia (n=98)	China (n=102)	Kazakhstan (n=87)	Total sample (N=287)
Loneliness level (UCLA), Me (Q1-Q3)	38.0 (32.0-44.0)	35.0 (29.0-41.0)	42.0 (36.0-48.0)	38.0 (32.0-45.0)
Digital literacy, Me (Q1-Q3)	67.0 (58.0-76.0)	72.0 (64.0-81.0)	54.0 (46.0-63.0)	65.0 (55.0-75.0)
Quality of intergenerational contact, Me (Q1-Q3)	42.0 (36.0-48.0)	46.0 (40.0-52.0)	38.0 (32.0-44.0)	42.0 (36.0-48.0)
Frequency of content creation (times/week), Me (Q1-Q3)	3.0 (2.0-5.0)	5.0 (3.0-7.0)	1.0 (0.0-2.0)	3.0 (1.0-5.0)
Blogging experience (months), Me (Q1-Q3)	18.0 (10.0-28.0)	24.0 (14.0-36.0)	9.0 (6.0-14.0)	18.0 (9.0-27.0)

Table 5 presents the distribution of respondents by level of loneliness and type of digital activity.

TABLE 5. Distribution of respondents by loneliness level and type of digital activity.

Activity types	Low loneliness level (<36 points)	Moderate loneliness level (36-44 points)	High loneliness level (>44 points)	Total
Active content creators (>4 times/week)	58 (64.4%)	24 (26.7%)	8 (8.9%)	90
Moderate creators (2-4 times/week)	42 (38.5%)	48 (44.0%)	19 (17.4%)	109
Occasional creators (<2 times/week)	18 (20.5%)	38 (43.2%)	32 (36.4%)	88
Total	118 (41.1%)	110 (38.3%)	59 (20.6%)	287

$$\chi^2=47.32, df=4, p<0.001$$

The expert survey identified three dominant models of support for silver bloggers (Table 6).

TABLE 6. Expert evaluation of the effectiveness of media strategies by country.

Effectiveness criteria	Russia (n=5) Me (Q1-Q3)	China (n=5) Me (Q1-Q3)	Kazakhstan (n=5) Me (Q1-Q3)
Accessibility of training programs (1-10)	8.0 (7.0-9.0)	6.0 (5.0-7.0)	7.0 (6.0-8.0)
Encouraging content creation (1-10)	7.0 (6.0-8.0)	9.0 (8.0-10.0)	3.0 (2.0-4.0)
Intergenerational integration (1-10)	6.0 (5.0-7.0)	8.0 (7.0-9.0)	5.0 (4.0-6.0)
Sustainability of participation (1-10)	7.0 (6.0-8.0)	8.0 (7.0-9.0)	6.0 (5.0-7.0)
Overcoming barriers (1-10)	6.0 (5.0-7.0)	5.0 (4.0-6.0)	7.0 (6.0-8.0)

Experts characterized the Russian model as “institutionally managed” (100% agreement), the Chinese model as “market-oriented” (100% agreement), and the Kazakh model as “basic functional” (80% agreement).

The analysis has revealed a positive correlation between content creation frequency and the quality of intergenerational contact ($\rho=0.69$, $p<0.001$). Pairwise comparisons using the Mann-Whitney test showed significant differences between all the countries ($p<0.01$) (Table 7).

TABLE 7. Forms of intergenerational interaction through blogging (% of respondents).

Forms of interaction	Russia (n=98)	China (n=102)	Kazakhstan (n=87)
Creating content together with relatives	42%	61%	18%
Receiving technical assistance from young people	78%	65%	82%
Sharing life experiences through a blog	54%	73%	23%
Participating in intergenerational projects	31%	48%	15%
Commenting on the content posted by young bloggers	63%	79%	34%

Focus group data identified the main barriers and facilitating factors for participation in blogging (Tables 8 and 9).

TABLE 8. Frequency of barriers mentioned in focus groups (n=12 groups).

Barriers	Number of groups that mentioned (%)
Fear of technical errors	11 (91.7%)
Lack of confidence in the value of one’s content	10 (83.3%)
Lack of technical support	9 (75.0%)
Privacy concerns	8 (66.7%)
Complexity of platform interfaces	7 (58.3%)
Negative audience reaction	6 (50.0%)
Physical limitations (vision, motor skills)	8 (66.7%)

TABLE 9. Success factors according to focus groups and expert survey.

Success factors	Russia	China	Kazakhstan
Structured training	+++	+	+++
Community support	+++	++	+
Commercial incentives	+	+++	-
Intergenerational mentoring	++	+++	+
Specialized platforms	+++	+	+
State support	+++	+	++

Note: +++ high significance, ++ moderate significance, + low significance, - not identified.

The analysis revealed fundamental differences in approaches to the development of the silver blogger phenomenon. In Russia, 67% of respondents reported participation in state-run digital literacy programs, compared with 23% in China and 58% in Kazakhstan. Commercial motivation was mentioned as important by 15% of Russian respondents, 72% of Chinese respondents, and 5% of Kazakh respondents.

The type of platforms used also differed significantly ($\chi^2=89.45$, $df=6$, $p<0.001$): Russian respondents more often used specialized social networks for retirees (43%), Chinese respondents used universal platforms with commercial potential (81%), and Kazakh respondents relied on messaging apps for family communication (68%).

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to analyze the role of silver bloggers as a media strategy for reducing social isolation among older adults through a comparative analysis of experiences in Russia, China, and Kazakhstan. The main finding is that active participation in digital content creation significantly reduces social isolation ($\rho=0.64$, $p<0.001$). However, the magnitude of this effect is determined by the cultural and institutional context of media support strategies.

The strong negative correlation between content creation frequency and loneliness aligns with findings in (Celdrán et al., 2022; Chang et al., 2023), which demonstrate the psychosocial benefits of digital participation. Critically, this relationship is non-linear: transitioning to active content creation (more than four times per week) is associated with a threefold increase in the proportion of individuals with low levels of loneliness (from 20.5% to 64.4%), indicating a threshold effect of regular practice. This refines the conclusions in (Brewer & Piper, 2016; Ryabchikova et al., 2025) regarding self-expression through blogging: not all forms of self-expression reduce isolation, but systematic content creation does.

Differences in the correlation between countries (from $\rho=-0.43$ in Kazakhstan to $\rho=-0.71$ in China) extend existing literature by demonstrating the culturally mediated nature of the effect. In the Chinese model, 81% of respondents use universal platforms (such as WeChat, Douyin, Xiaohongshu), where the audience spans all age groups rather than being limited to networks for older people. This fosters richer intergenerational social interaction compared with the Kazakh model, where 68% of respondents are limited to family messaging apps with a narrow circle of relatives. This explains the apparent discrepancy with (Kryucheva & Tolstoukhova, 2023; Miller et al., 2023), regarding the limited impact of digital training on loneliness: training is effective only when it leads to active content creation in a broad social context, rather than mere consumption.

The comparative analysis of the three models has revealed that the effectiveness of media strategies is determined by their alignment with the stage of digital inclusion. The Russian institutionally managed model demonstrates high accessibility of training ($Me=8.0$) and the effectiveness of specialized “safe” platforms in reducing technological anxiety (mentioned in 91.7% of focus groups), which aligns with (Thege et al., 2019; Golubtsova et al., 2025) on the need to overcome psychological barriers. The Chinese market-oriented model received the highest ratings for stimulating content creation ($Me=9.0$), confirming the effectiveness of commercial motivation for 72% of respondents. The Kazakh basic model effectively addresses functional literacy

($Me=7.0$ in overcoming barriers), but its low scores for stimulating creativity ($Me=3.0$) explain the higher levels of loneliness observed.

Data on intergenerational interaction ($\rho=0.69$ with content creation frequency) support the findings in (Sun et al., 2024) regarding joint accounts: 61% of Chinese respondents create content together with their relatives. The studies in (Pecorini & Dupl a, 2023; Togaibayeva et al., 2023) provide empirical support for the use of personal narratives to strengthen intergenerational solidarity. The high correlation between digital literacy and content creation frequency ($\rho=0.72$) highlights the need to focus educational programs on creation competences rather than mere content consumption, complementing the recommendations in (Gushevinalti et al., 2023; Ali et al., 2025) on participatory learning.

CONCLUSIONS

The identification of three distinct models allows for the adaptation of international experience to local conditions. For institutional support, it is recommended to strengthen intergenerational components and integrate specialized platforms with universal networks. For market-oriented contexts, it is critically important to provide basic training through social services. At the initial stage of digitalization, it is necessary to gradually complement functional literacy programs with content creation modules. A universal recommendation is to foster a regular content creation practice (more than four times a week) and to integrate digital safety modules (concerns were mentioned in 66.7% of focus groups).

The targeted nature of the sample, consisting of active content creators, does not allow for generalizing the findings or identifying typical behavior among older people, particularly those facing insurmountable entry barriers. The cross-sectional design does not allow for establishing cause-and-effect relationships. Reverse causality is possible, where less lonely individuals are more likely to participate digitally. Significant differences in the development of the phenomenon between countries (especially its absence in Kazakhstan) limit the possibilities for full comparison. The use of self-reporting methods may also lead to social desirability bias.

In the future, it is necessary to conduct longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of transitioning to active content creation on the social well-being of older people. Intervention studies with randomized controlled designs will help establish cause-and-effect relationships and assess the effectiveness of introducing elements of different models into social services. Qualitative studies of motivation and barriers in various cultural contexts will enhance the understanding of culturally mediated mechanisms.

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