Angelos Balatsas-Lekkas, VTT

Involving older users in the digital transformation of care services

The ongoing socio-economic turn to digitalization generates challenges as well as potentials of care services to create value for and *in* older people's lives. Public and private actors partaking in the digital transformation of care seek for service solutions that enable older people to live better, safer and longer *but also* reduce expenses from the public healthcare sector. mHealth and eHealth service solutions respond to these challenges by relying on multiple socio-technical configurations that older people become increasingly entangled with, such as the use of smart devices, while also generating loose boundaries between situations that relate to their use, such as illness, acuteness and wellbeing. Despite of how intuitive digital features of care services may appear to professionals involved in their making, older people might approach those with skepticism. Older peoples' fears about changes in habits, technophobia, small income, low skills in technology use and stigma may result to low or non-use of digital features of care services (Leikas 2009).

Aiming to address vantage points of older people in the digital transformation of care services this paper brings attention to their involvement in the development of digital services for well-being, exercise and safe care. Drawing on hands-on experiences with service co-development at a municipality owned "Welfare Lab" and a Finnish research institute the paper attends to:

1) Direct participation of older people as prospective end-users in stages of ideation, conceptualization and testing.

2) Representations of older people's use practices in collaborative work among health professionals, service designers and user researchers.

The notion of *temporary spaces* (Clausen and Gunn 2015) is proposed as a generative framework for addressing the phenomenon and temporal implications of involving older people as well as representing their concerns and practices in the co-development of digital features for care services. Temporary spaces are described as actor-networks in transformation (Callon 1990, Latour 1999) where humans and non-human elements have capacities for action, thereby reconfiguring their relations over time (Suchman 2007). The framework is applied in real-life cases, concerning the digitalization of meal ordering, grocery shopping and walking with rollators focusing on how insights about routines and use practices of older people become relevant inputs for the ideation, conceptualization and testing of digital features as well as how they influence the course of collaborative work of involved professionals.

Regarding the direct means of older peoples' participation, the analysis points to the formation of strong relations and to feelings of accomplishment and inclusiveness among older people and professionals but also reframing of professionals' sets of assumptions and expectations about the value that digital services bring for older people. Regarding the representation of older people's concerns and practices, the analysis points to an epistemic nature and circulation of objects (Ewenstein and Whyte 2009) in the co-development processes. Attention is brought to concept drawings, field notes and video segments and to their capacity to trigger questions among professionals about when, where, how and at whose expense digitalization of care services may add value for older people and implicated stakeholders in care provision.

References

Callon, M. (1990). Techno-economic networks and irreversibility. The Sociological Review, 38(1_suppl), 132-161.

Clausen, C., & Gunn, W. (2015). Clausen & Gunn: From the Social Shaping of Technology to the Staging of Temporary Spaces of Innovation− A Case of Participatory Innovation. Science & Technology Studies.

Ewenstein, B., & Whyte, J. (2009). Knowledge practices in design: the role of visual representations as epistemic objects'. Organization studies, 30(1), 07-30.

Latour, B. (1999). Pandora's hope: essays on the reality of science studies. Harvard university press.

Leikas, J. (2009). Life-Based Design - A holistic approach to designing human-technology interaction. VTT Publications 726. Helsinki: Edita Prima Oy.

Suchman, L. (2007). Human-machine reconfigurations: Plans and situated actions. Cambridge University Press.