

During the lunch break, so you can maybe have a go at some of these fancy VR tools, OK.

Hello everybody can you help me?

I'm audible enough.

How are hello? Yeah, that's good. OK. Hi, I'm sonita. I am associated with the center. Can I wait for people to settle down? So maybe.

Sangeetha.

I'm associated with the Center for Ageing Research. I'm a PhD student, happened to be carols and Emmanuel student here and as people we are just coming out of this COVID pandemic more than ever before. We realize the importance of environment in our lives, how environment can impact us in our everyday, how it can impact our quality of life and well-being. So in this context.

We are some of you might have experienced and maybe it is a very new innovative technology for you has been found to generate lot of interest by providing varied health outcomes for older adults including improving the mood, reducing the anxiety and also well paying. So as a researcher, I'm curious to understand whether virtual reality as a technology could.

The could provide a new virtual environment which could meet the needs of the older adults and thereby improve their well paying. So that's pretty much the theme of my PhD work. And under this theme I'm doing few studies and the first study we did was to review the literature and understand what kind of virtual interventions are out there. And we consider older people or a very diverse group. So we did a realist review.

Trying to understand.

How uh every different interventions work for different groups of people under where it's circumstances. So today the study that I'm presenting is about the attitudes of older adults towards we are the reason being.

This is based on the premise that understanding older adults attitudes towards accepting we are is fundamental for maximizing the potential this technology could offer in delivering improved well-being outcomes. For this study, we try to identify and examine the factors which could both positively and negatively influence the attitudes of the older adults towards we are, and how these factors could consequently contribute towards improving the well.

Thanks. So we used the theoretical concept called person environment interaction lens from environmental child entology. This was used to frame the interview questions and interpret the findings to explore if we are could meet the needs of all the adults and could it potentially improve the wellbeing. So another thing as as we all know for harmonious living, it is essential the environment where we live in kind of serve certain functions.

For us, like for example, for providing maintenance, stimulation and support, so we use the same concept in the VR how the how the VR environment could the VR environment in ways meet the environmental functions of maintenance, stimulation and support?

So I'm sure many of you are actually present here, could have perhaps participated in this study and I, in reading at your tasks, I do recognize few familiar names and an older adults were recruited from C4 AR bulleteer panel as well as the senior forum called Lancaster Friendship Centre and 13 older adults in the age group of 62 to 88 years were they did participate in the study.

So because of the COVID locked down, I could unfortunately we couldn't expose anybody to an actual way I experience. So what we what I did was I produced an introductory video on VR and shared a private link to the participants after they watched the link on a mutually agreed date.

Time. We had a telephone interview session which started with them asking any queries about.

We are from whatever they watched and whatever.

The apprehensions are so after managing to answer that I proceeded to go on with an in-depth interview which lasted about 45 to 60 minutes.

So these were the findings. So these are the important themes. So the factors which emerge, which could eventually contribute to the positive attitude, so all the others and these are the negative themes. So the first theme was we are as an alternative mode of travel and then the theme was we are as a tool for engagement as a tool for reminiscence and variety. And we are content so.

These are the uh factors which we found could, in a way positively contribute to the attitudes of older adults. So these are some of the codes from the teams which we are realized and a lot of people were interested to see. We are as an alternative mode of travel. So some said they've reached an age that they don't. They're not going to doing long distance travel. So they might do some virtual travel. They would be interested in it. And some said it's good to go places, but. Maybe some of the places they would love to see they're never going to try to get on a plane and do that. So if there's a chance to experience that in VR, they are interested to do so. Some of them are said it would be fascinating to go underwater in this virtual 3D environment and. And some said it would be nice. It could lift the mood if they could experience some.

Uh.

Very unusual, or a fantastical beyond environment.

So this also some said of the Google Maps. I'm I'm sure many of you would be using Google Maps every day for your travel or other things. You can also use the Google Maps in in the VR headset so some said they wouldn't mind doing a Google map track with the granddaughter to see and show the neighborhood they lived when when they were a kid. So there is there's a possibility of them, you know, going backwards in the past and relieving and experience.

And in terms of variety, uh that people want to experience and we are, it was really fascinating because someone wanted to be in a spaceship and some wanted to be in a submarine and they felt is better than playing bingo and.

And someone to actually be in a nice escape room. And they asked me, is there any escape room experiences? And we are we could experience and that that was really interesting and and another person even mentioned about actually.

Uh, you know, having more educative prehistoric Discovery Channel type of a thing?

So this one the being small sample group, they're not many people had anything negative to say, but there was one person who said who really hard technology anxiety. So for them to learn any new technology, it takes really long time. So she's so they said like they might be very nervous trying a new technology like VR. So they might not want to try it because of the fear of even trying it out. So there's another person who said.

They don't want to have the headset on the head because that will block the reality. But when you're trying out in a larger sample size, maybe then there could be more people subscribing to this attitudes, so the actual limitations. Because the study happened during the COVID lockdown, we couldn't hold ourselves being invulnerable group. We couldn't expose them to the actual experience. The other one we try to keep the sample as diverse as possible, but then we can only recruit people who volunteered for the study.

So there is definitely a sampling bias.

So this this is all the findings that are merged from the work. So as we said earlier, factors such as our themes such as we are as an alternative mode of travel, we are as a tool for engagement and for meeting the interest and as a tool for reminiscence and variety in video content played a

fundamental role in contributing to older adults, positive attitudes towards we are and also the another part of our work was to understand.

Whether virtual environment in some ways it can no way replace the real environment, meet the needs of older adults. So we try to test it with the theoretical construct. So we found a we are as an alternative mode of travel and as a tool to provide engagement and meet their interest and also variety in we are content serve the basic function of environment in terms of stimulation by providing a novel array of stimuli.

Which could have a positive impact on the well-being. So and then we are as a tool of reminiscence in some ways could meet the environmental function of support. For example, if you're watching a VI experience and the headset, and if that whatever you're watching, let's say, or watching you're walking, had a holiday in France and you are watching that in the via and it might trigger a sense of nostalgia because that place might have had a personal meaning for you.

So though we all cannot replace reality emerge you of that, it still could serve the environmental function of support by compensating for reduced or loss competency. Maybe you can't go back to the places again, but you can still experience the place through me up. So that's what we found during the discussion of the findings. And since the last study, we couldn't expose the people to the actual BI experience, my third study.

Uh, which is which should be starting in a weeks from now. We plan to expose all the adults to the actual VI experience and whatever we could, we failed to do in the early study. Those questions we are trying to explore here. So in terms of understanding, we are rising and vironment, we plan to understand whether people could create any kind of place meaning or attachment to places in the virtual world just as they would in the real world.

And by the this in a way could contribute positively towards the wellbeing. And so in this in this particular study as a researcher, I would be visiting the old articles. Hope volunteers who are designed to participate in the study for five days in a week, Monday to Friday.

And this is going to be a feasibility study because Noah, so far this study is not happen in a home environment. Most of the we are studies for well-being for older adults have have have contacted been conducted only in a care home setup or and institutional residency but not in the home environment. So this could be the first and after both pre and post exposure to the VR experience, we would be measuring while being using.

And the worry cover being scaled and there would be focus group discussions to understand whether people actually made any kind of place meanings, attachments within the VR world, which could lead to.

Improved building. There's more to this study. I'm not going into detail, but if anybody is interested, they can talk to me after this.

So thank you so much for listening and.

Is this different than lunch break? I will be demonstrating the VR if anybody have never say use VR before, please drop and I would love to show you and share the experience with me. Thank you. Thanks. So we're going to do some questions after the next talk. Is it an urgent one, David? Yeah. OK.

Yes. Yes, I can. Yes, God. Right. I'll raise my voice. It's it's fairly good. I used to be a modest Mountaineer. Right. I still climb hills about 2000 feet or so.

No, I'll be 18 in January. I'm coming. But that's no bother. I've gotta stand up so you can put it. I'm not falling over.

But CREB got Rich in North Wales, have done three times, finishing once at night. That's rocking. I want to I I couldn't really aspire to do it now, but I want to experience it if I can.

You really?

And and possibly tactile. Let's have some advanced stuff, haptic interfaces and all that. So I wanna volunteer volunteer.

Well done.

That's, I mean, uh, today in the demonstration, I'd be doing the rissa experience, which has a mountaineering aspect to it. I will take you to the mountains. Understand. You've got. Thank you. OK. So our next talk is loops.