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How Education Level and Willingness to Learn Affect Older Adults in their use of Mobile Technology in Southwest Idaho

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ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

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Introduction

- As a person's age increases, their use of technology decreases, which can hinder their access to resources, such as medical care, online products and services, and basic communication¹.
- For 90% of American adults, the use of mobile technology is a part of daily life⁴.
- Previous research shows that if seniors have higher education levels and willingness to learn, they are more likely to use technology².
- This project will examine how education levels affect a senior's use of technology, and how their willingness to learn affects their adoption of mobile technology.

Background

- By 2050 1 in 5 Americans will be over the age of 65. This is the largest growing population in the United States³.
- Technology has revolutionized access to everyday resources.
 - A third of online Americans agree that the internet has greatly improved their ability to shop and pursue hobbies.
 - Many Americans use the internet for medical purposes such as advice and support, to find a local health professional, or to seek medical information.
 - There is only a 10th of the United States population who does not own a mobile phone.
- Older adults have been stereotyped as "technophobic". However, research shows older adults adapt to technology if they see value in it.
 - 77% of older American adults own cell phones, and 18% are using smart phones.
 - 59% of older adults are online and the rest do not engage due to lack of access, little computer knowledge, or they see no need⁴.

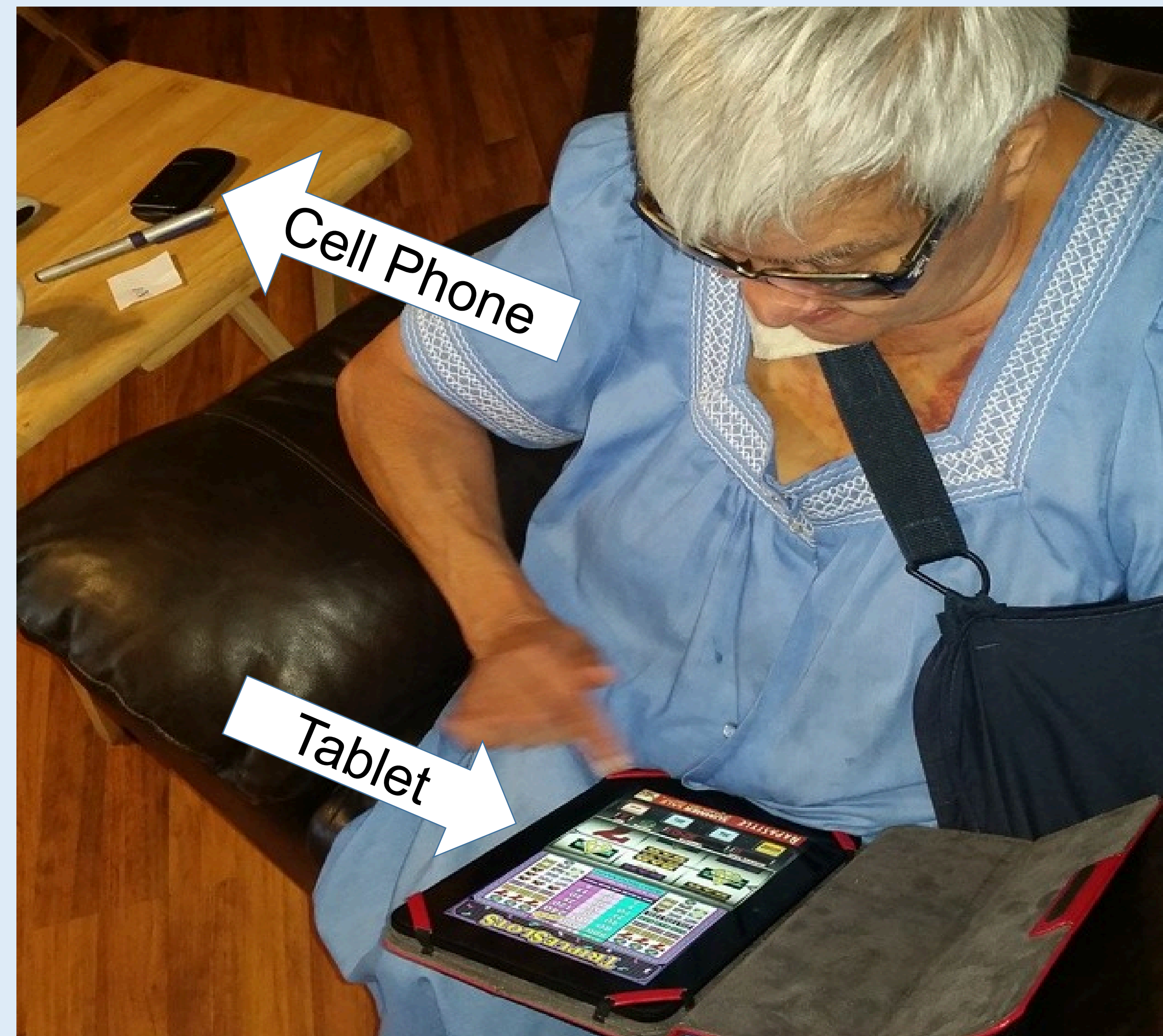
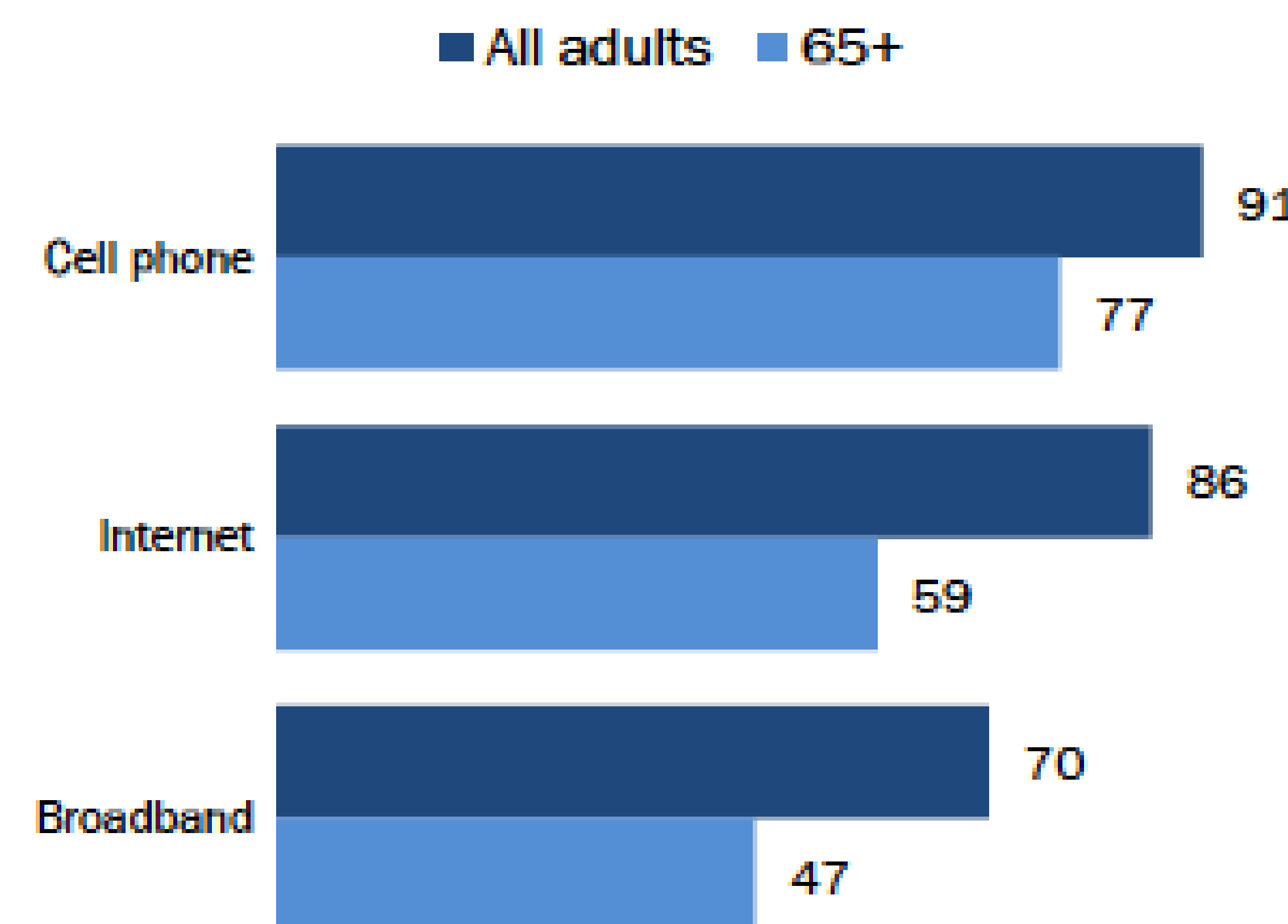


Figure 1. My grandmother, Bertha Chagolla (78) playing slot machines on a Kindle Fire tablet with her cellular telephone nearby.

Seniors continue to lag in tech adoption

Seniors vs. all American adults 18+



Pew Research Center's Internet Project July 18-September 30, 2013 tracking survey.

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Methods

- Interviews and surveys will be conducted with 100 individuals, males and females, aged 65 years or older
 - 50 individuals who are enrolled in educational courses at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
 - 50 Individuals who are not currently enrolled in any courses
- Questions on survey
 - Educational background
 - Past, present, and future technology use
 - Mode of technology preference
 - Would they be willing to learn?

Anticipated Findings

- Research Questions
 - How does education levels affect a senior citizen's use of mobile technology?
 - How does their willingness to learn affect their adoption of mobile technology?
- Implications
 - This research will give a deeper understanding of the factors that influence technology use in seniors, and how to encourage such usage.

References and Acknowledgements

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