Psychology: Technology instruction in senior populations

Paper citation: Seides J and Mitzner T (2015). The Effect of Delivery Method, Speaker Demographics, and Physical Environment on the Engagement Level of Older Adults. J Emerging Investigators *55*: 1-10

Paper questions:

In reading through the assigned paper, please answer the following questions:

1. Why is this research important and how does it relate to you?
    Most people know at least one individual who has trouble with the newest technological releases. In a world that's becoming more and more technologically advanced, it's important that everyone knows how to deal with that. This article deals with how to best handle the act of teaching older individuals how to use these new technologies.

2. The authors talk about some potential benefits of using technology. List **three** of the ways that the authors say technology can help older populations.
    Financial management from home, stay connected to friends and family, health management, memory support, etc.

3. Do you think that there are any downsides to using technology for older adults?
    Higher risk of malicious activity by a 3rd party if used inappropriately. More likely to be exploited on the internet.

4. What is the authors' big research question? What **two methods** did the researchers use to test it?
    The authors wanted to find out the learning technique which older adults preferred and were most likely to engage in. One way this was studied was through a survey

filled out by older adults. The second method involved presenting the older adults with a variety of learning methods and seeing how they respond to each.

5. The authors used an ANOVA to test their survey data. They report a p-value that shows at least one survey factor differs significantly from the others. Which factor(s) is/are significantly different from the others?
Using a Tukey test, "Incentive" was found to be significantly different from the other 5 factors in keeping their attention.

6. What do the authors conclude about their survey results?
Older adults preferred a guided hands-on or 1-on-1 learning approach in a familiar setting. Additionally, they preferred either a teenage teacher or a teacher over the age of 50.

7. Propose another study that trains adults on another type of technology. What are your predictions?
For example, one could assign older adults into various groups of learning using different methods and then see which method works best. That could then be compared to what older adults prefer to see if the preferred learning method is actually the most effective learning method.

8. What are some shortcomings of this paper? (Hint: Did the authors worry about the size of their study at all?)
The survey was only administered to individuals in 4 cities. These 4 cities may not be representative of the entire country. Alternatively, individuals in each city could have unique learning preferences within a city. The observational study only involved 14 individuals, which may be a bit small to make any meaningful conclusions.