When to call and when to text?:
Examining the communication preferences of younger and older adults

These days, there are a lot of different ways that we can communicate.

So I asked 155 college undergraduates (average age 20.6) and 124 internet-using older adults (average age 70.0)...

Q: Do younger people always prefer new tech to old tech?
A: Sometimes, but not always. When keeping in touch with family and friends who live far away, younger adults were not more likely to prefer newer technologies. The same is true when arranging a romantic date. And, when sharing good news, older adults were more likely to prefer newer technologies!

Conclusion: We can't assume that there is a huge difference between how younger and older adults prefer to communicate.

Q: Do younger people prefer email more than older people?
A: No! In all scenarios, older adults were more likely to prefer email than were younger adults. In fact, when keeping in touch with faraway friends and family, email was the most preferred channel for older adults; younger adults preferred the phone.

Conclusion: Older adults are big fans of email; younger adults, not as much.

Q: How can YOU help with research like this?
A: It's hard work finding older adults to participate in research. Ask Michael how he gathered data for this project. If you want to help, he has an email list you can join.

Don't hesitate to email or call with any questions:
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