Assistive and Interactive Technology Use, Comfort, and Interest in Caregiver and Older Adult Populations

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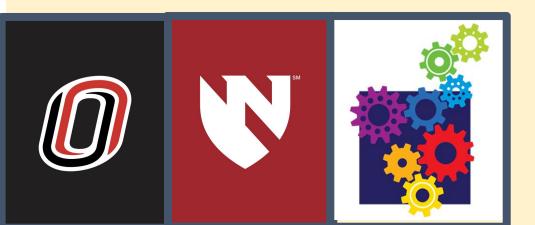
INTRO

- Remaining community-dwelling is a goal for most aging adults; however, this may necessitate assistance from caregivers. To reduce burden and improve adult autonomy, recent technological advancements have provided various supports. These advancements may improve quality of life (QOL) while also enhancing psychological/physical well-being for adults and caregivers. Overall, this study may inform future technological developments aimed at reducing barriers for older adults and caregivers.

METHODS

- To investigate relationships between technology, QOL, and caregiver burden, needs assessments with focus groups were utilized. Four older adult and two caregiver focus groups were conducted. Participants were drawn from a larger needs assessment survey. Persons self-identified as caregivers/older adult caregivers or older adults.

- Focus groups were conducted via Zoom video-conferencing. As such, participants were generally comfortable with technology and had access to the internet and a device on which to video chat.

- R was used for descriptive and qualitative analyses.

Frequencies of Variables of Interest		
Variable	**Caregivers (N=8)**	**Older Adults (N=20)**
	Mean %	Mean %
Age	57.8 ± 13.2	73.1 ± 5.3
Age of Care Recipient	81.28 ± 6.34	-
Sex (Female)	75.0	50.0
White	100.0	90.0
Internet Use	100.0	100.0
Smartphone Use	100.0	95.0
Computer Use	100.0	85.0
Tablet Use	75.0	65.0
CASP-19	45.50 ± 7.04	46.45 ± 4.9

*CASP-19=Control, Autonomy, Self-Realization, and Pleasure Quality of Life Scale

"You've got to **learn** to **live** with **technology**."

RESULTS

Caregivers

Older Adults

Frequencies of Relevant Words *(top 10)*			
Caregivers (N=8)		**Older Adults (N=20)**	
Word	**Frequency**	**Word**	**Frequency**
technology	20	technology	39
use	14	use	28
learn	14	people	22
phone	12	computer	13
ipad	11	good	12
new	10	time	12
covid	10	car	12
online	10	security	11
love	9	need	11
time	9	call	10

THEMES

- Simplicity:
  - "Why can't technology like your cell phone, your iPad, be obvious?"
  - "Systems have become too complicated [for people] and vulnerable [to hacking]"

- Privacy
  - "There is no privacy and that is a fact."
  - "I gave up on [privacy and security]... we're not going to have privacy the way we used to."

- Current Concerns and Future Technologies
  - "I love Zoom. I love FaceTime, I love interacting… Loneliness is the biggest threat to our lives right now, and especially this time with COVID-19"
  - "I am super eager for autonomous cars. I can hardly wait for autonomous cars. I'm prepared to wait for a few more years. But I'm going to need one."

CONCLUSION

- **Participants *like* technology and want to be able to use it.** Themes from focus groups suggest that there is a need for simpler devices that improve quality of life without putting the user at risk. This may inform future technological developments.