Use of Mobile Wellness Apps and Perception of Quality

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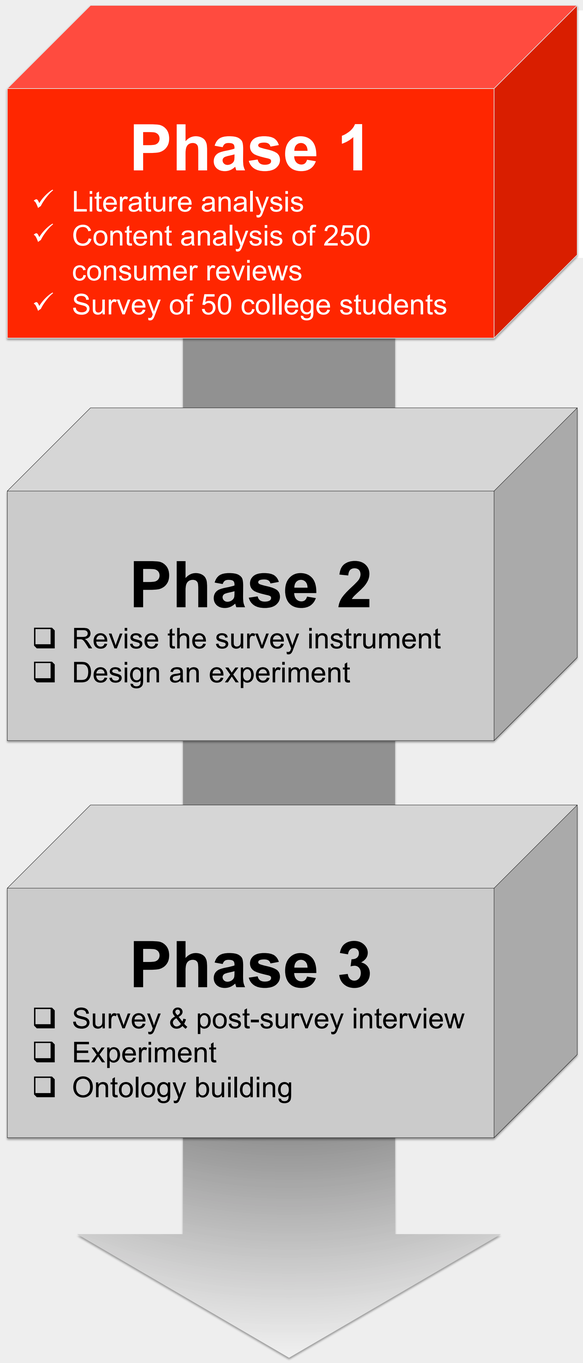

PROBLEM STATEMENT

- "Wellness" is a lifestyle that involves a preventive approach for the purpose of maintaining good mental and physical health (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000).
- Use of mobile apps leads to increased knowledge, positive health outcomes, more proactive health behavior (Wantland et al., 2004).
- Mobile apps are rapidly gaining ground as tools used to monitor, log, and manage the user's wellness activities.
- It is not always clear whether the apps are grounded in high quality medical and kinesiology research and perform according to the specifications from their descriptions.
- There is very little research on how consumers search and select mobile applications on the Web.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What sources do students use to find wellness information and services?
2. What kinds of mobile wellness apps do student use?
3. What are the purposes and features of the mobile apps?
4. How do students search for mobile wellness apps?
5. How do students search, identify, and select mobile wellness apps in apps stores?

METHOD

- Consumer reviews were selected from five top-tiered mobile wellness apps for running sampled from Google Play (average ratings as of June 23, 2013): 1) *Runtastic Running and Fitness* (4.6 out 5); 2) *Endomondo Sports Tracker* (4.5 out of 5); 3) *MapMyRun* (4.5 out of 5); 4) *Runkeeper* (4.5 out of 5); 5) *Nike+ Running* (4.3 out of 5).
- Ten negative and positive comments for each apps were randomly extracted (10 categories X 10 comments X 5 apps = 250 comments extracted) and content analyzed, guided by IQ and SQ assessment models (Fenton, 1991; Stvilia, Mon, & Yi, 2009; see Table 1).

IQ	Criteria
Accuracy	Accuracy, Credibility, Reliability
Completeness	Completeness, Clarity
Authority	Authority
Usefulness	Ease of Use, Objectivity, Utility
Accessibility	Accessibility, Cohesiveness, Consistency, volatility
SQ	**Criteria**
Reliability	Accuracy, Completeness, Consistency
Usability	Accessibility, Communicativeness
Efficiency	Accessibility, Device Efficiency
Compatibility	Compatibility

Table 1. Coding Scheme Used for Content Analysis

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

- IQ criteria, such as *accuracy*, *cohesiveness*, *ease of use*, and *consistency* seemed to influence users' perceived quality of mobile applications for running.
- SQ criteria, *compatibility* was mentioned as a beneficial feature for a mobile application for running, as it enables the mobile application to be integrated and used synergistically with other wellness-related applications and services.
- Users did not necessarily like the social network-related functions, which linked user data to SNSs (e.g., Facebook, Twitter).
- Negative comments tended to talk about the failures of different service components (e.g., having poor GPS signal, failing to synch data, etc.).
- Inaccurate information was also considered as a critical drawback for the mobile wellness applications for running.

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