
Trends in Mobile and Wearable Stress Care & Design Implications for a Culture of Wellness

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Abstract

Today stress care is gaining more attention, concerning about various aspects of quality life including physical, emotional and social wellness. This paper outlines how stress is perceived and managed with the aid of everyday personal technologies, how integrative approaches to wellness could empower individuals, and how interventions with personal technologies could lead to social innovations in health care culture. We reviewed varied meanings of wellness and stress in modern history, and surveyed recent technology applications for personal health, wellness and stress care (n=63). The survey has identified five trending themes that highlight distinct meanings of wellness and stress management in relation to corresponding technologies: 1) *informed self-care with tailored knowledge base*; 2) *guided self-reflection through personal data tracking*; 3) *mediated support group via social network platform*; 4) *mindfulness practice through sensory experience*; and 5) *lifestyle statement for future self with fashionable technology*. Based on these themes, implications for design-driven innovation are discussed toward a culture of wellness from a critical perspective on today's technology- and market-driven interventions in personal health care.

Author Keywords

Health care culture; wellness; stress management; personal technology; integrated approach; design-driven innovation.

Introduction

This study was published in the proceedings of the 20th Academic Design Management Conference (Boston, USA, July 28 – 29, 2016). As the society is becoming more complicated with overflowing information and social relations, public interest in mental health and stress care is also raised. Stress, not only involving physical causes and effects, is a social and cultural construct; and it is crucial for health care designers and researchers to understand how its historical and sociocultural meanings have evolved from an integrated perspective. This paper reflects about meanings and technologies associated with personal health care and

discusses about interface/interaction design implications toward a culture of wellness. We expect this study to open up culturally grounded innovations by integrating contemporary lifestyles and emerging technologies in personal stress care product development.

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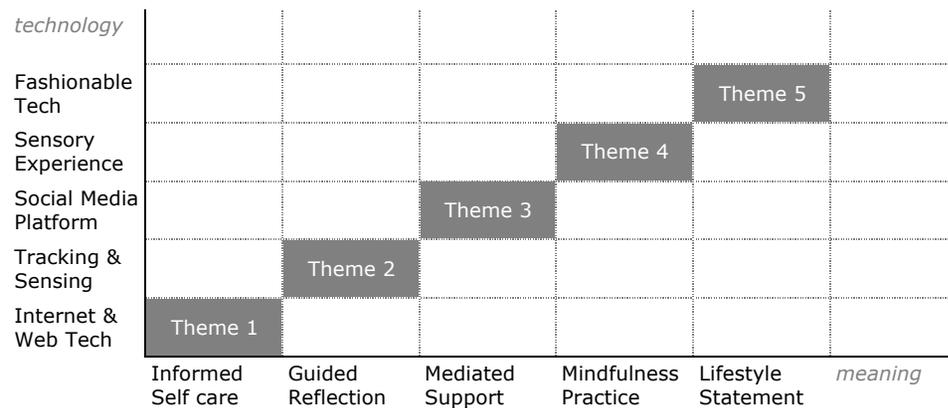


Figure 1. Innovation Matrix of Meanings and Technologies by Verganti (2009) applied to map out a trajectory of varied meanings of personal stress care products in relation to corresponding technologies applied to them.

- Theme 1.** informed self-care with tailored knowledge base;
- Theme 2.** guided self-reflection through personal data tracking;
- Theme 3.** mediated support group via social network platform;
- Theme 4.** mindfulness practice through sensory experience; and
- Theme 5.** lifestyle statement for future self with fashionable technology

Verganti, R. (2009). *Design Driven Innovation: Changing the Rules of Competition by Radically Innovating What Things Mean*. Harvard Business Press.