

Chapter 3

Attitude and Purchase Intention Towards Smartwatches: An Empirical Research on the Innovative Wearable Technology Field

Bilge Altuntaş

Istanbul Medipol University, Turkey

Ayşen Akyüz

Istanbul Medipol University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

As the marketing world tries to reach mobile users, a wearable technology market has emerged. This market would lead the digital marketing world to major innovation investments and entail companies to develop and improve marketing strategies in the area. The great breakthrough and development in the wearable technology industry allows marketing professionals to conduct more research on the subject. This chapter explores users' attitudes and purchase intention towards one of the most popular wearable devices, smartwatches. Two hundred surveys were taken into analyses which were collected between the dates of 1st and 2nd of June, 2018. Regression analysis, correlations analysis, t-test were conducted to test the hypotheses. While some independent variables such as hedonic values found to be the affecting the purchase intention; variables such as aesthetic appeal is found to have no influence on it.

INTRODUCTION

The wearable technologies have been a hot topic of discussion among marketers for some time now. Especially the development of technology in the field of health is thought to affect the use of the technology in everyday life.

Wearable technologies can be called as futuristic technologies. Most of the existing work on smart wearable devices is for exploration purposes. One of the most remarkable and most important tools of the wearable technology market is smartwatch technology. With the help of these watches, users can

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follow sports activities, access personal health reports instantly, and get notifications via synchronizing the devices with their mobile phones.

When studies on smartwatches are viewed, it is seen that hedonic value and aesthetic design are influential on the usage of the devices as well as how much users have adopted the technology and develop a strong attitude towards technology. In addition, it is suggested that articles written about wearable technologies should be studied in a conceptual framework in order to develop a good understanding on the reasons of the preferences of the device.

In this study, literature search on wearable technology, especially smartwatches, has been done comprehensively. Attitudes toward technology acceptance and technology, and variables related to hedonic value and aesthetic appeal were examined. Consumers' attitudes towards smartwatches and their intention to buy are measured by an empirical research. Very little research has been done on users' attitude and purchase intention towards these devices in Turkey. Therefore the authors believe that this study will make a good contribution to the newly developing literature.

WEARABLE TECHNOLOGIES AND SMARTWATCHES

Wearable technology is in everywhere and everyday life. Experiments on wearables have been conducted since the early 1980s (Mann, 1996). Wearable technology broadens the mobile concept which can appear on any gadget, in several format. It can be defined as a computer that is always on and always accessible (Mann, 1998). They are devices that can be worn by individuals that includes the ability to track information related to the user (Sandall, 2016).

Wearable technologies with functionality and time-saving features, make life easier and become an important part of our lives. Hearables, smart jewelry, smartwatches, fitness trackers and many other types are the latest entrants in the field of electronic devices. These devices not just perform the basic activities of mobile devices or computers, they also measure the heart rate or simply remind the user of the time to drink a glass of water. In this study the authors focus on one of the most popular device among wearable technologies, smartwatches.

Smartwatch, identified as the next big thing in the mobile device industry (Tehrani and Michael, 2014), is not only a device that tells time, but also a all-purpose computer with an array of sensors (Rawassizadeh et al., 2015). Smartwatch technology as wearable technologies are interesting technologies to be explored since they allow for the continual and rational collection of data (Rawassizadeh et al., 2015) and especially the enhancement of individual capabilities (Starner, 2001). According to Yeong et al. (2017), a smartwatch has the power to help individuals' daily lives since it consummates the smart-phones by providing convenient information access as providing the users to check notifications promptly. It is wearable or body-worn device and this is its biggest difference from conventional mobile devices such as tablets. If the user wears it, he gets the full benefit of it, otherwise no benefits would be reaped.

According to Statista report, smartwatches sales dramatically increased worldwide over the past years. It is seen that in 2004, the sales unit were 5 million while in 2017, 75 million unit smartwatches have been solved globally and in 2018, sales of smartwatches are forecast to reach 141 million units (Statista Report, 2018). In Turkey, the smarthwatches sales accounted for 13.2 million dollars in 2016 (GFK Report, 2017).

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