

A Research on the Emotional Values of the New Silver Generation in Mobile Usage –Based on Qualitative Approach –

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Abstract. Currently, mobile devices have become common in our society and it has become necessary to take a new approach for researches on the acceptance of mobiles among the new silver generation. Rather than focusing on the physical function, it is necessary to take a qualitative approach. Based on the emotional value factors derived from the factor analysis of previous studies, by conducting in-depth interviews on the new silver generation, this study attempted to make qualitative analysis, which can overcome the limitations of the quantitative analysis of previous studies. The study verified the quantitative factors through qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews on the new silver generation. Therefore, by adding emotional parts to the factors that influence the mobile acceptance of the new silver generation, the results can be utilized not only for establishing differentiated development strategies but also for marketing.

Keywords: New Silver Generation, Emotional Value, Smart Phone, In-Depth Interview

1 Introduction

The spread of smart phones in the Korean society has rapidly proceeded. A 2013 research shows that 71.6% of the total population is using smart phones (Korea Internet & Security Agency, 2014). The demands for mobile devices will gradually increase, and along with the advent of more innovative and advanced devices, individuals will possess various devices depending on their environments and life style. Such development of IT technology will bring changes, creating new paradigm for the silver market. As the society ages, senescence stage after retirement, takes up from 20 to 30 years of the life span. In this sense, the elderly consumers can be perceived as new opportunities for companies, and the potentials of the silver market are increasingly gaining attention. Considering the phenomenon in which the silver market is gaining spotlight in other industries, there are great possibilities that the old generation will become a major consumer group for mobile products as well. However, in reality, not many studies have been made, regarding the needs analysis or development strategies for the new silver generation, which are fundamental parts in developing mobile services. Therefore, a qualitative research on the emotional values of the silver generation will provide a basis for understanding their needs in services and devices. Also this research is expected to become the starting point for researches on the development of mobile device technologies, services, and utilization plans.

2 Research Purpose

Smartphone show two technological tendencies: extension of function and miniaturization of device. As small-sized screens and limited number of buttons bring about difficulties in performing the functions of smartphones, usability and usefulness of the device are requisitions for the effective use of the product(Lindholm & Keinonen, 2003). The development of technology and homogenization of the product quality decrease the differences in the functions among different products. Therefore the emotional value factor has great direct influence on the decision making of product consumption.



Fig. 1. Emotional Value Factors of the New Silver Generation Derived from the Factor Analysis of Previous Studies (Huh, 2012)

The new silver generation users, who are also the baby boom generation, have different lifestyle characteristics compared to the existing elderly. Lee (2002) predicted that a new silver generation that has a life form including values, behaviors, and economic conditions differing from the existing silver generation, will appear starting from 2010. Smartphones targeting the new silver generation must be approached with style that can allow them to enjoy a refined and classy phone culture, rather than focusing on the inconveniences caused by their physiological functions. Also it must also be approached from a perspective considering the hobbies and emotions of the user (Kim et al., 2011). Therefore it is necessary to comprehend their values and based on the analyzed values the lifestyle types should be categorized, in order to perceive individuals as the main agent of life and achieve a general understanding (Kim, 2009). Such values include not only cognitive and behavioral components but also emotional components.

This research takes an emotional approach focusing on the changes in lifestyle, or economic and social status rather than focusing on their deteriorating physiological functions caused by aging. Based on the emotional values extracted through factor analysis of previous studies, qualitative analysis was made by conducting in-depth interviews among the silver generation, in order to overcome the limitations of quantitative analysis of previous studies. This research aimed to verify the quantitative factors through qualitative methods, by conducting in-depth interviews among the new silver generation.

3 Research Methods

The change of values, emotions, and lifestyles of the new silver generation, which occurs along with the change of media environment, influence the users' use and fulfillment of smartphones. The spread of smartphones was achieved in a short period of time, and consequently the actual users are age groups from teenage to those in their thirties. Although the gradual spread is also observable among the silver generation, currently there are not many active smartphone users among the new silver generation. Due to these conditions, there are some limitations to the research of silver generation smartphone users.

This research examined the fundamental process that draws the emotional values, which are situated in the deep inner side of the new silver generation regarding the use mobile devices, based on the factor analysis and in-depth interview. First of all, the in-depth interviews were conducted based on the literature review focusing on the precedent studies and the factor analysis results of precedent studies of this research.

4 Verification of the Emotional Values of the New Silver Generation through Qualitative Research Methodology

4.1 In-depth Interview

Qualitative research through in-depth interview has been chosen as the methodology because qualitative research allows the researcher to attain not only simple answers but specific information regarding opinions, motivations, assessments and interpretations. Also the researcher is able to observe the cultural characteristics, and can induce the participants to answer freely within their daily experiences and thoughts (Hansen, Cottle, Negrine, Newbold, 1998).

4.2 Selection and Characteristics of In-depth Interview Participants

The in-depth interviews were conducted based on the results of the factor analysis on emotional values found in the precedent studies. In general, for sample selection of interviews, researchers select people who do not have the experience in the related research field. Therefore, among the new silver generation smartphone users with the age range of 55-60, residing in Seoul, this research selected samples with the following standards:

- ① The new silver generation living in Seoul with the age range of 55-60.
- ② Person with high smartphone utilization
- ③ From the physical properties, the new silver generation with different levels of income and academic background has been selected

The interviews were carried out from February 10th, 2014 to February 25th, 2014; and the interviews were each 3-4 hours long. Before the interviews, operational definition of the smartphone was made to eliminate the confusion concerning language. The interview subjects were in total 13 participants: 8 male and 5 female participants. The average age was 56. The level education varied: 7 participants completed graduate school, 3 participants completed four-year degree at a college or university, and 3 participants completed high school. All of the participants, with one exception, resided in houses owned by their family. Regarding jobs, 4

participants had professional jobs; 4 participants, management/office jobs; 3 participants, no job; and 4 participants, others. Regarding religion, there were 8 Protestant Christians; 3 Buddhist believers, and 1 Catholic Christian. Regarding the number of smart phone application usage in a week, 2 participants used applications less than 5 times and 11 participants used more than 5 times.

5 Research Results and Future Directions

5.1 Research Results

The analysis data of this research was acquired through interviews. Through the process of documentation, the recorded contents of the interview participants were transferred to the computer before analyzing the data. The process of data analysis was based on Irving Seidman's methods (Park & Lee, 2009). First, read the contents of the profiles of research participants. Then important and interesting parts are marked, and then the contents are reduced, systematizing the contents into different categories. Also, after finding connections and patterns that could be considered as themes, explain and interpret the relation between different categories to suggest solutions.

5.2 Future Suggestions

Through the emotional value factor of the new silver generation, this research searched for an alternative with the emotional approach that can converge with the technological aspects of mobile devices, and not from the approach focused on overcoming their physiological limitations.

In future studies, it is necessary to discuss the specific methods of mobile usability of the new silver generation integrating the in-depth interview results among the new silver generation conducted to enhance mobile usability.

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