Enhancing mood-tracking journaling app experience in expressive writing

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▶ Abstract

The study methodology involves utilizing the Heedzy platform to gather user reviews from Google Play for three mood-tracking apps: VOS: Wellbeing Plan & Journal, DailyBean: Simplest Journal, and Moodfit: Mental Health Fitness. The objective is to comprehensively analyse these reviews to identify the features and functionalities a mood-tracking journaling app includes to enhance user satisfaction and areas for improvement. By analyzing user expectations and experiences, the study aims to answer the following: What design features and functionalities should a mood-tracking journaling app incorporate to optimize user satisfaction and experience in expressive writing?

▶ Introduction & Background

Modern life pressures have escalated mental health concerns, especially among young adults. Recent UK statistics show a rise in anxiety and depression cases among those aged 16 to 24. Additionally, over 1 in 20 people in the UK are diagnosed with seasonal affective disorder (SAD). As a therapeutic tool, expressive writing has been proven to enhance mental and physical health. The advent of mobile health (mHealth) apps offers platforms for mental health management, with mood tracking being viral. However, the success of these apps hinges on user experience, usability, and alignment with user expectations. This research aims to explore optimal design features for mood-tracking journaling apps to enhance user satisfaction and actionable insights.

▶ Study Methodology

Data Collection: Used The Heedzy tool to collect the user review data from Google Play for the mood-tracking apps with star ratings, review text, and timestamps.

Review Analysis: Conducted Sentiment analysis on each app's user reviews, categorizing them as positive, neutral, or negative. Particular attention will be given to features, functionalities, and overall user satisfaction mentioned in the reviews.

Feature Compilation: The reviews is scrutinized to determine users' opinions on features and functionalities within mood-tracking journaling apps.

▶ Research Results

Features Users Liked:

- Customization & Personalization
- Goal Setting and Achievement
- Daily Questions & Inspirational Content
- Daily questions or prompts to guide journaling
- Mindfulness & Meditation Features
- Positive & Motivational Vibes

Areas for Improvement:

- Can have ability to create user's own word template for quick selection
- Daily Questions & Inspirational Content
- Notification Issues

Future Work- Prototype Design:

▶ Conclusions

- Users prioritize customization, tracking, and mindfulness features in mood-tracking apps. They appreciate positive reinforcements like gratitude reminders and value goal-setting tools, responsive support, and an intuitive interface. However, they've highlighted issues with login, app bugs, and notifications, and expressed a desire for more personalized features and data export options.

- Due to time constraints could not using diary tests for the prototype evaluation. This limitation points to future work where comprehensive diary testing can be integrated to enhance the prototype's effectiveness and user experience.