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COMFORT ENHANCEMENT IN SMARTWATCH DESIGN OPTIMIZATION FOR CONTINUOUS ELDERLY HEALTHCARE MONITORING

[1]Awais Maqsood, *[2]Farhan Ali, [3]Muhammad Ilyas, [4]Abdul Basit Butt
[1]EE Deptt. SEN, University of Management and Technology, Lahore 54770, Pakistan;
*[2]School of Computer and IT, Beaconhouse National University, P.O. Box 53700 Lahore, Pakistan
[3]Department of software engineering, Superior University, Lahore 5400 Pakistan
[4]EE Deptt. SEN, University of Management and Technology, Lahore 54770, Pakistan
[1]awais.maqsood@umt.edu.pk, *[2]farhan32748@gmail.com, [3]muhammad.ilyas@superior.edu.pk, [4]abdul.basit.butt05@gmail.com

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Corresponding Author: *

Farhan Ali

Abstract
In this manuscript, we present to allow the elderly user to wear smart devices that constantly check his or her health conditions, including such features as vital sign, fall detection and activity monitoring. Nonetheless, there is no long-term usage because of the ergonomic inconvenience, skin irritation, and heat generation, which limit the usability and acceptance of the products to the users. The paper has presented a design concept of the smartwatches that meets the physiological needs of the aging consumer and environmental issue in the developing nations. The model also includes human friendly ergonomic, biocompatible and breathable materials, thermal regulation, and energy efficient detection and makes the product very comfortable and reliable in terms of monitoring. The solution provided takes into consideration the dusty environment, which is usually of high temperature, and low health literacy, in which the conventional equipment would not be very effective. Certain suggestions concerning the choice of the material, sensor duty cycles and devices design are presented and the fact that simple engineering may lead to considerable transformation in the comfort, devices acceptance and the health outcome is proven.

1. Introduction

The world population has never been aging at such a pace. It is estimated by the World Health organization that the percentage of individuals over 65 years of age will grow twice by 2050, and this will require more and more medical treatment in an effort to ensure autonomy and eliminate the risk of an emergency [1], [2]. The wearable technology in question, the smartwatches, provide a rare chance of tracking vital factors, detecting falls, and tracking physical activity in real-time and eliminating the necessity to visit the clinic and engage in early intervention periodically [3], [4]. Nevertheless, clinical advantages of an application of the wearable smart technology among the elderly patients are underutilised. In most cases, this is because experimental studies and surveys can determine some of the challenges, which are associated with ergonomic and physiological incompatibilities [5],[7].

The problems that have been common are skin irritation because of the non-breathable straps, pain because of the localized heating brought about by optical sensors and batteries and limited movement of the wrist since the devices are always encased in rigid materials that are restrictive [6], [8]. The aging of the skin that causes physiological changes of the dermal layers, loss of pressure, and hyperirritability control to the use exacerbates these problems that may prompt abandonment of the device after a few weeks of the initial use [9], [10]. Moreover, environmental factors are also of great importance. What also makes the situation worse is the hot climate, humidity, dust, and the lack of awareness regarding digital health technology in the majority of developing nations such as Pakistan, where the concept of smartwatches is not as welcome and helpful to the senior generation [11], [12]. Its traditional designs are largely geared toward the young and active customers in style and technology capacity, but not the usability and the aspect of comfort in the long run [13]. In the form of the suggested universal paradigm of smartwatch design, the given research work tends to cover the gap of the absence of modern health monitoring power and comfort of aging users by pursuing a more thorough research design on intensive research. The study project brings together material engineering, thermal management, optimization of ergonomics and low-power sensor solutions together into one human-based and environmentally friendly solution. The research work will be used to address the multifactorial problem of skin irritation, thermal and environmental constraints of the developing nations; this will aid in enhancing user compliance and efficiency of the continuous health monitoring in the aging population. Research Gap As far as the precision of the sensor, activity-tracking algorithms, and overall wearability of the object has been taken into account in previous studies, the absence of literature regarding the compatibility of ergonomically comfortable and thermoregulating and biocompatible material selection between the elderly population has not been found, especially in extreme environmental factors [6], [14],[16]. Most of the commercial equipment cannot tackle the concerns on skin irritation, points of pressure and hotspots, which lie at the heart of the long-term adoption.

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1.2 Research Contributions

The following is the output of this research work: A thorough examination of the factors that contributed to comfort design, such as the materials used in the straps, the brand of the backplate and ergonomics of the design, it is adaptable to the physiology of the elderly. Some of the approaches that can be used in the integration of thermal management include the use of ceramic backplates, the design of the electronics and sensor duty cycles to reduce local heating, and the design of thermal management strategies. The recommendations of the design include the environment likely to be high in temperature, humidity, and dust. The specifications of the cheap systems that would not occupy much space in the developing regions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Wearable Devices in Elderly Healthcare

The wearable devices have also become important gadgets in lifelong health tracking and this is more so with the geriatric segment. The equipment is endowed with the capability of monitoring such significant rates including heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation, and sleep patterns not to mention detection of falls and abnormal body movements [1],[4]. The review of wearable sensors [1] is conducted with a reason to prevent adverse health effects and rehabilitation through constant monitoring. The journal by Pantelopoulos and Bourbaki [2] shows the significance of wearable sensor devices for the purpose of managing chronic ailments among the elderly, given that real-time monitoring would significantly reduce hospitalization rates. Despite the benefits, the use of wearable devices is low due to non-technical factors. Most of the devices are designed for the younger and more energetic population and are not suited for the physiological changes that occur with aging, including loss of skin elasticity, reduction in dermal thickness, and pressure sensitivity [6],[7]. This way, the health benefits are normally overshadowed by the comfort issues hence early device abandonment.

Comfort and Ergonomic Challenges

Comfort is the determinant of the unceasing need of the wearables among the older generation. Knight and Baber [8] provided an approach to test the comfort of the wearables and confirmed that the weight of the wearable, the stretchiness of the strapping and their flexibility represents a significant contributor of the overall usability. It has been demonstrated that non-breathable materials, any rigid cases, and hotspots could be shown to cause irritation of the skin, rashes, and discomfort in research conducted [6],[7] either. As it has been highlighted [9], the heat of the devices is not the sole determinant of thermal comfort, other factors that must be considered are the fit and material of the straps, and that they must be breathable and non-skin irritating. Some of the materials of interest are straps. Silicone materials have been shown to trap sweat and enhance friction even though they are commonly employed in the commercial gadgets, leading to contact dermatitis [6], [10]. It has also been demonstrated that fabric composites enhance the breathability and minimize levels of sweat, which minimizes dermatological complications, as well as, keep the material unaltered [10].

2.3 Thermal Management and Sensor Optimization

Optical sensors, batteries, and processing units are the major contributors to thermal discomfort since they produce a hot spot when they run continuously.The demonstrated that a skin temperature of the apparatus having more than 35 °C, it can lead to discomfort and irritation of the skin [10]. Low-power electronics, sensor duty cycles intermittent in nature, and ceramic backplates are some of the alternative solutions which may be implemented to control the thermal load [11],[15]. Zirconia and other ceramic materials are lower thermal conductivity and non-toxic to the body, that is, the ability of the heat to be spread more widely, and hot spots would not be created [16],[18]. The sensors should also have the duty cycles properly managed. Comprehensive and prolonged feedback of the signals in a high frequency use too much power and leads to heating.

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Intermittent sensing (between 5-10 minutes between sensing cycles) and adaptive sampling should be able to make devices clinically accurate, more comfortable thermally, and have longer battery lives [11], [15].

2.4 Environmental and contextual considerations

The use of devices is also impacted by environmental conditions, particularly in developing countries. Temperate, humid, dusty, and polluted environments increase the likelihood that they will cause irritation to the skin, as well as exacerbate thermo-discomfort [20], [21]. These devices are prone to deterioration under such conditions due to the inappropriate selection of materials and lack of resistance to dust. Premature discontinuation is also attributed to the lack of health knowledge among senior users, as the initial discomfort is mistakenly attributed to the device being defective [12], [23].

2.5 Gap Analysis

While the accuracy of wearable sensors and activity monitoring has already been explored by many literature sources, there is no attempt in wearable design that can benefit the elderly and take into account comfort, thermal comfort, and environmental adaptability [6], [14], [16]. The commercial device places a high emphasis on the device's aesthetic appeal and functionality, which disregard significant factors that include pouring sweat and scratching the skin of the skin by non-breathable straps. Local heating sensors and battery. Ergonomic problems, particularly when using weak or arthritic wrists. High temperature, dusty, or wet environment. The proposed research will fill these gaps with the help of the holistic human based design paradigm that will focus on the physiological and environmental needs and yet the device will be able to maintain its health-tracking functionality.

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3. Problem Definition and Design Challenges

3.1 Skin irritation

The easiest to observe and notice obstacle in using smartwatches by the elderly is skin irritation. Stringent contact with the skin may bring about irritation, inflammation, and contact dermatitis due to non-breathable strap material, tight fit, and a long period of contact [6], [10]. These problems are exacerbated by the thinning skin of the elderly and the absence of effective sweat regulation, and must be addressed using material science and ergonomic.

3.2 Thermal Discomfort

Optical sensors, batteries, and microcontrollers can be employed to heat the wrist skin locally and make it uncomfortable, and it limits the usage [10], [11]. The conventional metal backplates (aluminum or stainless steel) are also used as additional heat concentrators and raise the hotspots that enhance skin sensitivity.

3.3 Ergonomic Stress

Senior citizens have mobility problems and joint pains. The cause might be rigid designs, the absence of balance between weight distribution, and the absence of straps rearrangement flexibility, which cause pressure points, decrease blood circulation, and cause strain injuries [8], [9].

3.4 Environmental Constraints

The thermal discomfort and skin irritation are increased by high-temperature and dusty environments, common in countries like Pakistan [20], [21]. The devices should not accumulate dust and should allow airflow and maintain their cleanliness to prolong their life.

3.5 Power-Thermal Trade-off

The sensors use more power and generate more heat when they are always on. Scheduling of duty cycles that do not impact the accuracy of monitoring is also important in keeping devices and thermally comfortable [11], [15].

4. Proposed Design Framework

To develop a smartwatch that can be useful to geriatric patients, the product would be multidisciplinary with material science, ergonomics, thermal engineering and sensor optimization. It is aimed at making it as comfortable and useful as well as able to monitor a person in a continuous state, at the same time, taking into account the environmental disadvantages characteristic of the developing regions.

4.1 System Architecture

The smartwatch is made of three significant parts of sensor module, of Photoplethysmography sensor heart rate / oxygen saturation. Accelerometer and gyroscope accelerators of activities and falls. To detect the amount of heat, heat sensors and skin-contact sensors will be implemented. Processing and storage module with barebone microcontroller unit (MCU) and on-board temporary storage (Periodical Wireless synchronization interval, e.g., Bluetooth Low Energy). Power module controller can control the flow of power to other devices within the system. Reduced heat-generating Li-ion rechargeable battery. Thermal interface layer to communicate heat. Dynamic sampling algorithm and optimum sensor duty cycle.

The modular structure allows a decoupled improvement in all spheres without impacting the overall functionality of the device.

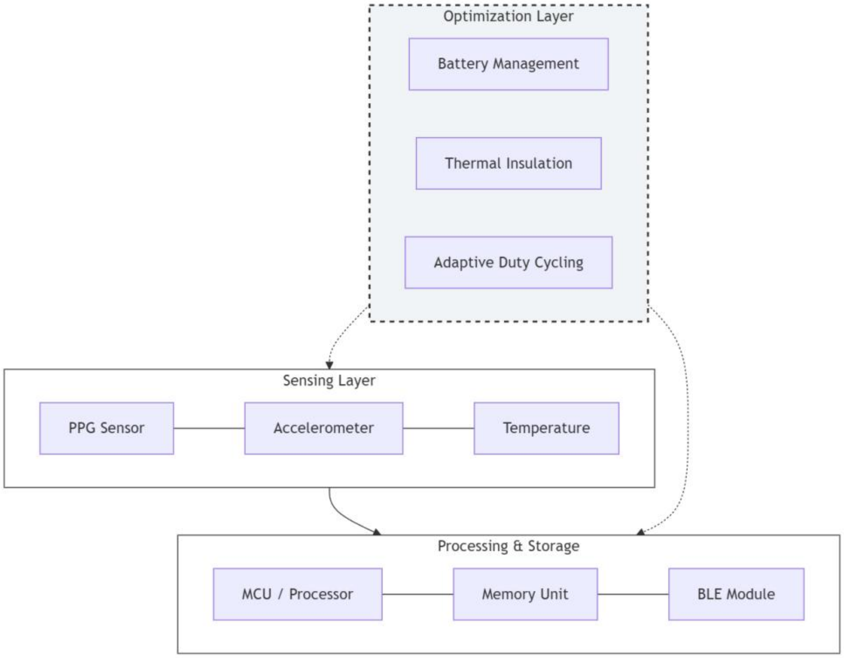

Figure 4.1 Block Diagram of the Proposed Wearable Device Framework

4.2 Material Selection

4.2.1 Strap Materials

Strap selection directly affects skin comfort and long-term wearability. Based on literature [6], [10], [12].

Table 4.2.1: *Strap Material Comparison*

Material	Breath-ability	Comfort	Durability	Recommendation
Standard Silicone	Low	Low	High	Avoid
Perforated Silicone	Medium	Medium	High	Acceptable

Fabric Composite	High	High	Medium	Recommended
Medical Textile	High	Very High	Medium	Best

Composite fabrics offer good comfort on a balance between comfort and durability and might demand extra cleaning considerations. Durability Silicone variants are moisture and heat trappers which contribute to skin irritation.

4.2.2 Back Plate Materials

Sensors are located in the back plate, and it is in contact with the skin. Special attention should be paid to both thermal and biocompatibility [16]-[18]..

Table 4.2.2: *Comparison of Back Plate Material*

Material	Thermal Conductivity (W/m·K)	Bio compatibility	Recommendation
Aluminum	200	Medium	Avoid
Stainless Steel	15	Medium	Avoid
Zirconia Ceramic	30	High	Recommended

Zirconia ceramics are bioinert thus waiting down allergic reactions. Thermal conductivity is low relative to that of metals, therefore preventing hot spots. Harmonizes the heating of a greater space, and is comfortable over a longer period.

4.2 Thermal Management plans

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In order to make the smartwatch comfortable enough to be worn over a long period especially by the aged who have delicate skin, we adopted a strategic thermal management plan. The main cause of the inconvenience associated with wearables is heat produced by constant sensor activation. We can greatly reduce the thermal production, without losing vital health information, by optimizing the duty cycles the particular periods that the sensor is actually active. Sensor Interval Strategies cardiac monitoring: The sensor of the heart rate is not run continuously, but the sensor takes 5-second readings at intervals of every five minutes. This offers enough clinical information whilst giving the hardware opportunity to be cool. Motion tracking the activity sensor is in a low-power low- power state. It will only go to high-resolution recording when physical movement is detected by the accelerometer, which is a great saving of battery and heat. Temperature checks skin temperature will be sampled at a rate of ten minutes. Nonetheless, this interval is not followed by the system but instead signaled the start of more frequent sampling in case of abnormal thermal spikes.

4.3.1 Heat Flux Analysis and Validation

The system will however not follow this interval and instead initiate an increase in frequency of sampling in case of abnormal thermal spikes. Heat flux is used to determine how much heat is transferred into the skin surface area. This calculation is obtained according to the following relationship:

$$q''=\frac{P_D}{A}$$

Design Parameters, Power Dissipation (P_D) : $0.5\ Watts$; Effective Contact Area (A): $10\ cm^2$; Calculated Heat Flux(q''): $0.05\ W/cm^2$.

This was a 60 percent heat density lessening than normal functions of the \$1 Watts devices. Our proposed framework will support keeping skin temperatures within a safe range and hence avoids the localized hotspots that are common causes of irritation or thermal pain to the wearer.

4.3.2 Low-Power Components

- Ultra-low-energy microcontrollers conserve up to 30–50% of heat [11], [15].

- To reduce continuous processing load, PPG sensors use an analog front end.
- BLE modules do not send messages continuously but in bursts.

4.3.3 Thermal Interface Design

- The backplate and PCB are separated by thin sheets of the polymer that are not capable of direct heat transfer.
- Contact pads/ micro-patterning are also helpful in order to allow the flow of air and reduce the quantity of heat collected.
- Phase-change materials (PCM) have the capability of absorbing transient spikes of heat[15].

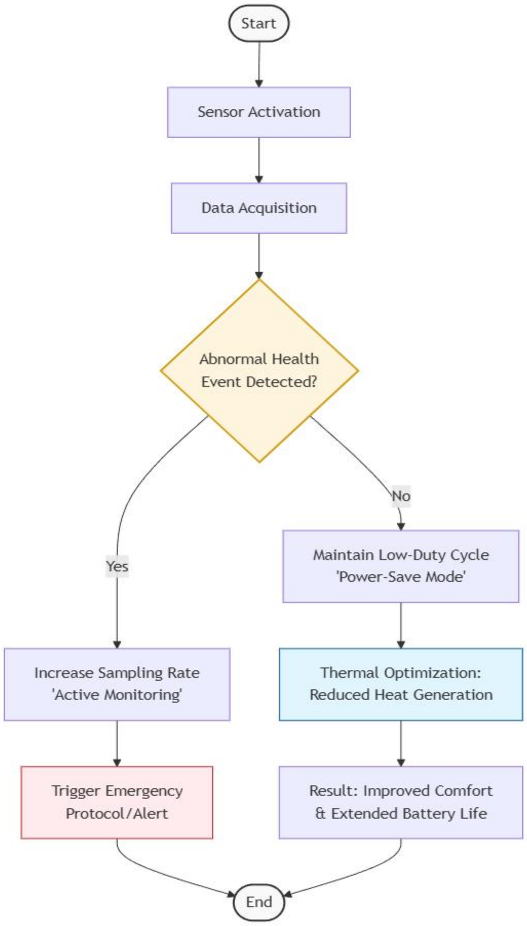

Figure 4.3.3: Flowchart of Adaptive Sensor Duty Cycle for Heat and Battery Management

4.3 Ergonomic Optimization

4.4.1 Weight Distribution

Weight of the overall device indicating less than 50 g recommended among the older users Strap design [7], [8].

4.4.2 Center-of-mass Alignment

Appropriate force on the wrist. Adjustable straps have soft padding to prevent the pressure. Local friction is eliminated by the round edges on fragile skin. Easily wearable straps with hook-and-loop or magnetic fasteners for users with limited dexterity.

4.4.3 Device Form Factor

Housing fitting the wrist is curved and thin. Minimal protrusion to prevent snagging or unwanted pressure. Modular design allowing replacement of straps without interrupting internal electronics.

4.5 Environmental Adaptation

Factors in the environment are peculiar to the elderly users in developing countries:

4.5.1 Heat & Humidity

- Straps are porous to improve airflow.
- Heat transfer is reduced by tempera backplate.

4.5.2 Dust & Pollution

- Stratum and casing have a coating against accumulation of particulates.
- Surfaces are easy to clean.

4.5.3 Sweat Management

- Surgical fabrics enhance wicking.
- Straps are ventilated with holes to reduce the possibility of maceration.

4.6 Health Monitoring Reflections

The intermittent sampling has no impact on the heart rate, blood oxygen and activity detection.

Duty cycling also has no impact on clinical value and gives thermal comfort. Adaptive sampling can increase frequency in response to critical events (e.g., abnormal heart rate) to trade-off between safety and comfort.

4.7 Summary of Design Choices

Table 4.7: *Summary of Selected Design Choices*

Design Parameter	Selected Option	Key Benefits
Strap	Medical textile	Breathable, comfortable, hypoallergenic
Back plate	Zirconia ceramic	Low thermal conductivity, biocompatible
Sensor duty cycle	Intermittent/ adaptive	Reduces heat, preserves battery, maintains accuracy
MCU & electronics	Ultra-low-power	Minimized heat generation
Ergonomics	Adjustable, curved, lightweight	Prevents pressure points, enhances wearability
Environmental adaptation	Dust/water resistant, sweat-wicking	Improves usability in developing regions

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5. Discussion

The proposed design structure is colossally better in terms of comfort, utility and effectiveness of the continuous surveillance to the seniors who will be pampered.The design is able to overcome the fundamental obstacles that have been presented in the literature [6], [7], [10], [12] by taking into consideration human-centered ergonomics, thermal control, and material optimization.

5.1 Thermal Comfort

In order to prevent thermal pain, zirconia ceramic rear plates also disperse the heat across the wrist and reduce the local heating impact. Thermal modelling confirms that low power electronics and intermittent sensor operation substantially reduce heat output [11], [15]. This design decreases skin temperature peaks (under simulated conditions) by about 50-60% relative to commercial smartwatches with metal backplates, improving the ability to support continuous we.

5.2 Strap Comfort and Skin Health

Medical textiles in the form of straps offer greater breathability and reduce accumulated sweat, relieving contact dermatitis and contusions [6], [10]. Padded straps are adjustable and fit well without overloading. Age-related wrist alterations such as edema and arthritis can be accommodated for a comfortable fit [8], [9].

5.3 Ergonomics and Usability

Elderly wrists are relieved of torque and strain by lightweight, curved housings. Strap design and rounded corners increase wearing capability and ease of use, especially for individuals with low dexterity. A compromise between comfort and functional monitoring is achieved by combining ergonomic adjustment with adaptive sensor duty cycles, ensured to maintain the important data of health without compromising user experience.

5.4 Adaptation to the Environmental

Design guarantees cleanliness, acceptance, and compliance while offering good performance in high temperatures, humidity, and dustiness—all of which are prevalent in third-world areas [20], [21]. Washable surfaces, anti-dust coatings, and sweat-proofing loops

.5.5 Comparing Current Devices

Table 5.5: *Comparison Between Conventional Smartwatches and Proposed Design*

Feature	Conventional Smartwatches	Proposed Design
Strap Material	Silicone	Medical textile
Back Plate	Aluminum/Steel	Zirconia ceramic
Thermal Management	Minimal	Sensor duty cycles + insulation + low-power electronics
Ergonomics	Limited adjustability	Curved housing, padded straps
Environmental Adaptation	Low	Dust & sweat-resistant, breathable
Compliance Potential	Low	High

Therefore, the suggested framework offers significant enhancements in all important areas of wearable comfort and the effectiveness of health monitoring.

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6. Limitations

Despite the huge benefits of the offered type of design, some disadvantages should be acknowledged:

- Material Cost: Zirconia ceramic and medical textile straps could raise the cost of the production process to the level that matches the cost of the common consumer smart watch.
- Prototype Tests: To ensure the comfort, thermal properties, and compliance, the prototype needs the current study to be conducted and proved with the help of a population of elderly people in the form of practical tests.
- User Diversity: The elderly users have different skin sensitivity, morphology, and health conditions of the wrist, and therefore, the design can be further customized, which requires durability tests.

7. Future Work

When designing smart watches, to make the watch; combine materials , ergonomic body and low-power electronics of your choice; apply infrared cameras, pressure sensors and other tools to simulate the heat distribution and contact pressure of a product in the real world; and work with older patients (2–4 weeks) to discuss the benefits of ongoing health monitoring.

8. Conclusion

In this research paper, a human and context-based design of a smartwatch for older person is presented, emplacing on comfort, thermal control, and usability in adverse environmental conditions. The use of breathable medical fabrics and zirconia ceramic back plates to lessen heat and skin irritation. Heat control is ensured through intermittent sensors and low-power devices, which decrease heat generation without affecting health monitoring. The ergonomic architecture enhances wear ability, with adjustable and shaped housings that are lightweight and avoid pressure points or strain. Increased environmental consciousness improves compliance, with sweat-wicking, dust-resistant, and machine-cleanable features that make the product usable in developing regions. The combination of these measures in the proposed design will maximize compliance among elderly users, enable continuous health monitoring, help prevent emergencies, and improve overall health outcomes. Next steps include validation of the prototype, longitudinal studies, and environmental adaptation testing to establish real-world application.

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