

Background

Physical inactivity is a significant problem for public health, which increases the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. Physical inactivity results in 3.2 million deaths worldwide each year (WHO, 2023). In the United Kingdom, many young adults do not engage in enough physical activity to meet recommended guidelines, which increases the risk for chronic diseases (NHS, 2023). Traditional interventions have included educational initiatives and fitness programs to encourage people to engage in regular exercise. However, mobile health apps are now used as an intervention tool to encourage behavior change.

Health Promotion Principles and Values

The health promotion principles include empowerment, equity, participation, and prevention. Empowerment allows the individual to take charge of his or her health behavior, participation allows the individual to take part in his or her health improvement, and equity allows the entire population to have access to health resources. The importance of mobile health application technology lies in the fact that it allows the individual to take advantage of his or her health by providing an opportunity for the individual to monitor his or her physical activity and become aware of health behavior.

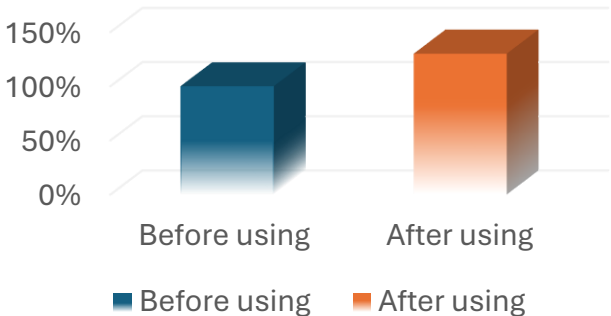
Behavior Change Theory

The Social Cognitive Theory indicates that behavior change is an outcome of a combination of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors. One of the important constructs of this theory is self-efficacy, which is “an individual’s judgment of their capacity to perform a specified behavior.” Mobile health apps can help individuals enhance their self-efficacy as it enables them to “set goals and monitor and get feedback about their physical activity.” Other features may include “reminders and badges and social support” that can “encourage and sustain individuals in regular physical activity.”

3.2
MILLION

deaths per year due to physical inactivity (Statistica,2024)

APP EFFECTIVENESS



Expected Outcomes

Mobile health applications have the potential to enhance the physical activity levels of young adults. This is through the motivation, awareness, and self-management of health behaviors. The regular use of mobile health applications may improve the physical fitness levels and lower the risk of chronic health conditions. However, the effectiveness of mobile health applications may be affected by digital health inequalities. These inequalities may include smartphone availability and internet accessibility.

Conclusion

Digital health technologies have the potential to significantly enhance public health promotion strategies. Mobile health applications can support behaviour change and encourage healthier lifestyles when integrated with health promotion principles and behavioural theories. Policymakers and healthcare organisations should consider incorporating digital health tools into public health programs. Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term effectiveness of digital interventions and addressing digital health inequalities.



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