

Abstract

The objective of this dissertation was to examine the impact of self-measurement technology on tracking physical activity (number of steps taken) in users' practice through exploratory qualitative research. The study was carried out on 11 university students, consisting of 6 male and 5 female participants, aged between 20 and 28 years. A quasi-experimental design and a Fitbit Zip self-measurement device were utilised; no randomisation of participants into the intervention group was implemented, and no control group was included in the research design. The NEO PI-3 questionnaire was administered to measure the participants' personality traits.

The findings furnish an initial qualitative understanding of the topic and indicate promising avenues for further examination. The impact of our intervention on participants' physical activity was not consistent, as some experienced an augmentation while others observed a reduction. Conclusions were drawn for only 5 participants. However, a variance comparison revealed distinct changes in physical activity patterns for each participant. The variability will probably be more pronounced in a larger sample. The majority of participants attributed at least a temporary influence on their behaviour to the device. Specifically, 8 out of the 11 participants were influenced by the device providing information about their activity. The technology they were given affected the participants' information-seeking behaviour, and they only sought solutions within its defined area. Individual factors influence how users respond to the intervention, with neuroticism and conscientiousness being the most significant among the Big Five personality traits. It should be noted that our findings merely describe the situation in the sample and are not generalisable conclusions; nevertheless, they enhance the comprehension of users' information behaviour in this field.

Keywords

quantified self, self-tracking, Fitbit, information behaviour, personality traits