McFadden, C. (2017). Motivational readiness to change exercise behaviors: An analysis of the differences among exercise, wearable exercise tracking technology, FIT values and BMI scores. (Doctoral Dissertation, Towson University).

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Abstract

The present study explored if the use of wearable exercise tracking technology during exercise supported increased exercise behaviors of frequency, intensity, and time, collectively known as FIT values. Research has shown that increased FIT values equate with stronger, more positive health outcomes and decreased obesity and chronic disease risk. Young adults often gain weight during their college careers, in part due to decreased exercise activities. The purpose of this research was to better understand if the use of wearable technology during exercise might be related to potential positive exercise behaviors among university students. This study employed a quantitative methodology that used the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change to identify where students fell along a motivational continuum to exercise and to use a wearable tracking technology. This analysis illuminates the differences between the motivational stage of regular wearable technology use during exercise and increased exercise behaviors and simultaneously highlights the potential of wearable exercise tracking technology to increase exercise behavior. This research provides a quantitative investigation not yet fully explored in the literature about the intersections of wearable technology use, exercise behaviors and positive FIT outcomes. The findings of this study suggest that wearable exercise tracking technology may be connected with positive exercise FIT values and may play a role in increasing exercise behaviors in university students. Health educators can facilitate the use of wearable exercise tracking technologies as they teach students about the importance of the technology-provided data for both short- and long-term exercise behaviors and related health outcomes.