

Chapter 5

Aiming at Digital Health via mHealth Application for Generation Y Post- Pandemic Scenario

Riya George

CHRIST University (Deemed), India

Reshma Rose Thomas

CHRIST University (Deemed), India

S. Swathi

CHRIST University (Deemed), India

Sowmya A. C.

CHRIST University (Deemed), India

Mary Rani Thomas

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1372-3032>

CHRIST University (Deemed), India

ABSTRACT

Medical and health products have become a part of our lives. A health-conscious society is the aftermath of the pandemic. The increasing role of technology has pushed people to online alternatives for medical services, progressing towards digital health. This research thus contributes to the nascent literature on the impact of mHealth apps and the consumption pattern in Bangalore in the post-pandemic scenario. This research investigates from the perspective of usage, privacy, and affordability of the mHealth apps. Results suggest that usage is positively affected by the affordability and privacy of these apps. Firstly, app developers could use the findings for different digital health marketing strategies and implementations for the mHealth app. Secondly, academics can look at other aspects such as the knowledge people possess regarding apps and their proficiency in accepting technology. Finally, the policy discussion makers can work on concerns of affordability and privacy to cater to the more significant population segment.

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INTRODUCTION

Technology is vital in today's modern world and all aspects of our daily life. Technological advancements have become widespread (Adams, 2019). Due to this advancement, the conventional way of availing medical services has changed to modern approaches. Technology deployment in healthcare has become crucial to reduce inequality and increasing the accessibility to healthcare to larger beneficiary groups (Al-Shorbaji, 2021). With the aid of technology, consumers can access services with greater convenience, mainly due to increased flexibility, reduced cost, and overall process time (Sam et al., 2022).

Consumption is integral to life; our society revolves around consumption, from necessities such as food and clothing to luxury products and services. Medicines are also becoming necessary due to increasing demands and changing lifestyles (Liu et al., 2021). Every individual consumes, irrespective of age, gender, and profession. Although, in general parlance, the consumer is a term used for people who purchase goods and services; consumers are different from buyers in connection with marketing. Consumers who are part of the revolutionary digital change can now access services from these mHealth apps at greater convenience and reduced cost (Singh, 2023). While cost and convenience have benefits, they also have potential drawbacks. Consumers buy healthcare products, store them without prescriptions for comfort, and reduce their costs by not visiting a medical practitioner. Consumers have started purchasing antibiotics, and misuse of antibiotics have been a concern among medical practitioners. Introducing the mHealth app can revolutionize some of the issues associated with cost and convenience in the traditional format (Bock, 2022).

Age is one of the critical determinants of health expenditure. It differs according to different age groups. According to OECD (2021), spending on healthcare remains constant till the age of 50—people who are 65 and above account for 60% of healthcare spending. The oldest people, aged 85 years and above, have the highest health spending need. However, people between 65 and above spend approximately 16% of the average national income on health, and adults around 80 spend especially on long-term health care. Young citizens spend the least on healthcare products. In the wake of the pandemic and its different variants, people have started depending on online healthcare products and medical services to a large extent.

mHealth, which denotes mobile health applications, uses mobile phones and other healthcare technologies. These mHealth apps have revolutionised the healthcare sector over the last few years. To name a few, Unmind is a B2B mHealth app that has emerged that addresses mental health concerns for people, especially employees in an organisation. It has various exercises curated to enhance the concentration and mood of the users through audio, visual and interactive content. The second one is mSafety, a mHealth app paired with a smartwatch and streamlined cloud connectivity that can be utilised as a diagnostic tool. It is being used in Europe to monitor kidney patients and can also be used to track and predict the risk of falling (Sriram, 2022).

According to Pratap (2020), some popular mHealth apps in India include Practo, Medlife, Netmeds, 1mg, MyFitnessPal, and Curefit. Practo helped people book appointments, order medications and consult doctors online. Medlife, Netmeds, and 1mg allowed users to order medication online, consult doctors and get information about medical conditions and symptoms. MyFitnessPal enabled users to track their diet and fitness goals by allowing them to log their meals, track calories and monitor their exercise routine. Curefit was another popular app that offered a range of fitness and wellness programs such as yoga, meditation, and even workout routines. It also provided users with insights and information on healthy eating and nutrition.

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