How can Behavioural Change Theories inform UX design features to allow users to be motivated to complete a full Mental Fitness Course?

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Abstract

Behavioural change applications (BCAs) aim to promote users to take action to change a specific habit or promote a certain behaviour. The current project used behavioural change theories to provide a framework for examining future proposed features. Additionally user research provided evidence for the importance of specific features – Goal-Setting, Daily Reminders and Personalisation, as well as the limitations that can be remedied. A recommendation for user testing and research is put forward.

Introduction & Background

The FIKA application aims to encourage users to proactively support their mental health, through their range of Mental Fitness courses. However, a UX problem identified lies within users struggling to complete a full course. The current project aims to to take a behavioural change theory approach to understand how this UX issue can be remedied. Several behavioural change theories have been examined (fig 1) and their common themes, as well as how they relate to specific features.

Research Methodology

Survey
A survey was created using google forms. Participants were required to complete up to 22 questions after giving consent

Aims – To understand user journey through BCAs

To understand what aspects motivated them and demotivated them

Interviews/ Focus groups
2 interviews and 2 focus groups were carried out

Aims – To get a deeper understanding of users feelings related to motivation when using BCAs
To understand what motivated users and what demotivated them

To get a deeper insight about the three important features found from user survey.

Research Results

Survey
BCAs are widely used but not consistently
Reasons for stopping use of BCAs
- Lack of engagement, and lack of habit formation
Three important features
- Goals, daily reminders and personalisation

Interviews
The three main features were overall regarded as important for motivation but there are limitations to be addressed
Goal Setting
- Goals with small steps are preferred over larger goals
- Goals are helpful if easy to visualise
Daily Reminders
- Helpful trigger to complete behavioural change tasks
- Unhelpful when guilt tripping Difficult to snooze
Personalisation
- Positive when implemented well to specific needs
- Difficulties arise when this is a paid feature

Framework

FIG 1.

The diagram is a framework that presents 6 behavioural change theories (column 1), common themes (column 2), design features that promote motivation linked to these theories (column 3), and finally the three significant features found by user research (column 4)

Lit review and User research has found that the three features (column 4) are linked to motivation due to their relation to the key themes of behavioural change theories
Applying to FIKA, the current framework can be used to examine future features and whether they have theoretical backing from multiple theories / elements (columns 1 & 2)

Conclusion

Outcomes
1) User Research results provide important insights into specific features and how they can be adapted for a good UX
2) Behavioural change framework – Future features should be assessed based on behavioural change themes

Future Work
1) Further user interviews would be valuable
2) User testing, including A/B testing. Studies that examine motivation over a long time period would be very beneficial