

IIT Mandi reveals importance of online reviews in driving adoption of wearable health monitors

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The research will help practitioners for designing strategies that facilitate usage of wearable technologies for personal healthcare management



A group of researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi has analysed the different factors that affect herding in adoption of wearable technologies for personal healthcare. They have used mathematical models to analyse data collected from surveys to provide insights into the marketing effectiveness of online reviews.

The research has been led by Dr Saumya Dixit, Assistant Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Mandi, and co-authored by her Ph.D. student Anjali Pathania from IIT Mandi and Dr Gowhar Rasool, School of Business Studies, Central University of Jammu, Jammu.

In modern times, online reviews are the electronic version of Word-of-Mouth, or eWOM, that can influence the "herding" or group behaviour of individuals in the adoption of wearable technology for personal healthcare.

IIT Mandi researchers aimed to understand the role of online reviews in inducing other people to buy and use wearable technology for personal healthcare. They surveyed 434 wearable technology users and analysed the data using the method of Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with Smart PLS.

The research showed that online reviews by users who are similar to oneself (homophilous users) can help in herding potential customers into the adoption of wearable technology for personal healthcare. Thus, platforms that encourage consumers to leave their reviews must also encourage the reviewer to share information such as their gender, age, region, and specific health value facets (e.g., related to exercise, diet, rest, and usage of personal healthcare tools) along with their experiences of how wearable technology products have helped them achieve related health goals. This can bring in more customers and improve usage of wearable devices for personal healthcare in future.