

Improving Access to Mental Health Care Through Online Services in Underserved Community

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Youth Mental Health Academy Capstone Project

Background

- Many underserved communities face barriers to mental health care.
- Common barriers include cost, transportation, provider shortages, stigma, and language differences.
- Online mental health resources may improve access while reducing these barriers.

Cost

Transportation

Provider Shortage

Stigma

Language Barrier

Limited Insurance

Research Question

How does access to online mental health resources affect individuals in underserved communities?

Research Approach

- Reviewed 5 peer-reviewed studies
- Compared findings across sources
- Identified common themes
- Used secondary research only

Discussion

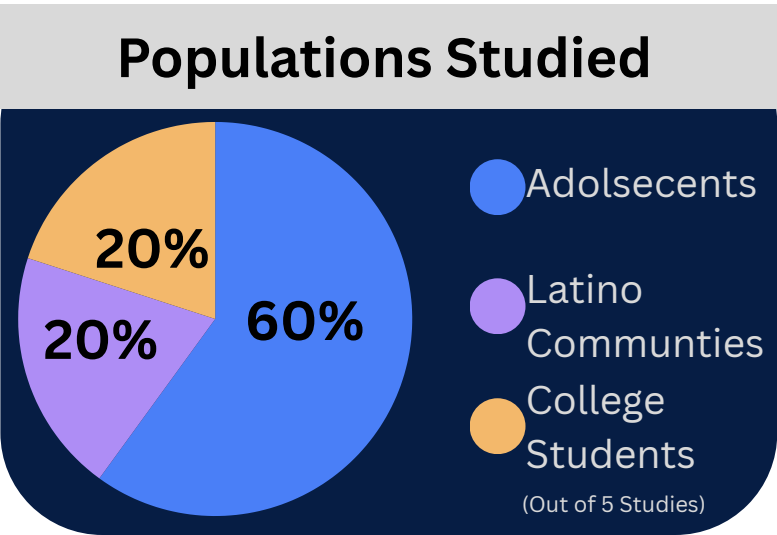
Online mental health resources help reduce barriers to care for underserved communities.

Digital tools improve access and can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. Challenges such as limited internet access, privacy concerns, and digital literacy still exist.

Expanding awareness and culturally responsive services could further improve access to mental health care.

Literature Review

- Wani et al. (2024)
Digital mental health interventions for adolescents in low- and middle-income countries improve access to care and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- Islam et al. (2023)
Income level and community resources significantly affect access to online mental health services.
- Lehtimaki et al. (2021)
Digital interventions and online support reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression among users.
- Parra-Cardona & DeAndrea (2016)
Online mental health services help reduce language and cultural barriers for Latino communities.
- Hamza et al. (2025)
Professional recommendations and awareness increase the use of online mental health resources.



Results

Increased Access

Positive Outcomes

Health Inequalities

Barriers

Professional Support

Finding	Frequency (Number of Studies)
Increased Access	3
Positive Outcomes	3
Health Inequalities	3
Barriers	3
Professional Support	2

KEY FINDINGS

Online mental health resources improve access to care by reducing barriers such as cost, transportation, and provider shortages.

Digital interventions help reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression and improve overall well-being.

Internet access, privacy concerns, language differences, and digital literacy remain barriers.

Professional recommendations and awareness increase the use of online mental health resources.

Underserved communities benefit the most from increased access to online mental health services.

Conclusion

Online mental health resources improve access to care for underserved communities, but expanding internet access, improving digital literacy, increasing awareness, and offering culturally responsive services are necessary to maximize their effectiveness and ensure more people receive the support they need

References

- Wani et al. (2024).
- Islam et al. (2023).
- Lehtimaki et al. (2021).
- Parra-Cardona & DeAndrea (2016).
- Hamza et al. (2025).