



Strategies to Improve Women's Wellbeing: An Exploratory Study of Supportive Mental Health Apps

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Abstract.

Smartphones permeate our culture. With the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the development of mental health apps has accelerated enormously. The present study aims at exploring their potential and efficiency in improving women's wellbeing by following a three-fold qualitative analysis based on App selection, App feature analysis, and App traffic analysis of four successful tools: *Happify*, *Shine*, *Sanvello* and *Talkspace*. These apps contain a lot of information that can help their users to better understand and improve their condition. A patient's smartphone can be transformed into a monitoring and therapeutic platform, capturing mental health symptoms in real time and providing immediate supportive therapy. Apps are not a substitute to traditional face-to-face therapy. However, they can become a gateway to the awareness of subsequent care. They can also help psychologists to enhance the progress of patients. Mental health apps provide guided activities and motivating tracking in contexts of maternal depression, pregnancy care, patients with breast cancer, stress reduction and psychiatric illnesses, improving considerably women's wellbeing and, what is more, helping destigmatize women's mental health care.

Keywords: alternative psychological therapies, cognitive behavioral therapy, mHealth apps; mental health; mobile apps