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## Utilising Education to Combat Technology Barriers to Improve the Uptake of Mental Health Apps among Health Care Workers in South Africa.

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Given that a considerable number of studies indicate empirical evidence on mental health technology applications, there still exist problems of translating clinical interventions into practice internationally and nationally. About 14 000 deaths per annum are caused by suicide, with 280 000 suicide attempts in South Africa, making it the second most common cause of death among youth. Exacerbating the issue is the low uptake of the mental health app (MHA) due to the negative attitudes of healthcare workers (HCWs). Hence, the paper investigates the implementation strategy of educating HCWs on combatting technology barriers of the MHA. By educating HCWs, they further impart it to their clients to reduce mental health issues. Measurements of determinants and outcomes are conducted using a quantitative, quasiexperimental approach before and after implementing the evidence-based MHA. An interview using a Likert scale measures determinants, and a survey measures outcomes. According to the findings, a lack of digital literacy and interoperability limitations contribute to the low uptake of the MHA among HCWs. Increasing the uptake of the MHA seems promising partly due to the Covid-19 pandemic proving that Telehealth is effective. Although some HCWs are stagnant in their negative attitudes, more findings indicate great potential for 2 the HCWs to change their attitudes after educational workshops to increase the uptake of the MHA in South Africa. Additionally, the successful implementation of the MHA in mental health facilities requires integration with existing computer systems. Future implementation research must consider investigating fidelity to further reduce mental health issues using the MHA.

### Biography

Omphile Rashope is a Psychology and Counselling academic excellence graduate with a strong interest in research and public speaking. She is currently honing her epidemiological skills through a Bachelor of Health Science (Honours) degree in Public Health at the University of Witwatersrand. Passionate about alleviating mental health and behavioural issues, she aims to impact the public's health by using a holistic biopsychosocial framework. Previously, she served on the Rotary International Club of Pretoria East as a member and a former student representative council member at the South African College of Applied Psychology. In addition to her leadership style, she promotes mental well-being through research and psycho-education to prevent mental illnesses as well as communicable and noncommunicable diseases that affect behaviour. In the mental health field, she has planned and coordinated psychosocial interventions for traumatic brain-injured individuals and 3 marginalized communities. Furthermore, she has been involved in research regarding how to improve the Psychology system in South Africa. She also occasionally psycho-educates audiences about mental disorders through Pretoria Psychologists, which is in collaboration with the South African Depression and Anxiety Group. She has also coordinated with the BodyMind Wellness Clinic team by implementing a Mental Health app that is recognized by the South Africa Mental Health Conference 2023.

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