

BMHP5019_BIRM – Introduction to Independent Research Skills

400-word Scoping review proposal

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Title

A Scoping Review of Digital Mental Health Interventions for Children and Young People in the
UK: Identifying Themes Using Aveyard's Simplified Thematic Analysis

Background and Rationale

Mental health difficulties among children and young people (CYP) in the UK have increased significantly in recent years, placing growing pressure on health and social care services. The NHS has responded by expanding digital mental health interventions, including mobile applications, online cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), teletherapy, and digitally delivered services within Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). These interventions are promoted as accessible, cost-effective, and scalable solutions to service demand. However, the rapidly expanding evidence base has produced varied findings regarding effectiveness, accessibility, engagement, and equity. As a result, there is a need to systematically map existing UK-based research to better understand key themes and gaps in the literature. A scoping review is appropriate for examining the breadth and nature of digital mental health interventions for CYP, informing practitioners, policymakers, and future research within UK health, social care, and digital health practice. **Research Aim and Objectives**

Aim:

The aim of this scoping review is to map and synthesize UK-based peer-reviewed literature on digital mental health interventions for children and young people.

Objectives:

1. To identify and categorize key themes within UK literature on digital mental health interventions for CYP.
2. To map the types of digital mental health interventions currently used in UK practice.
3. To identify gaps in the evidence to inform future research and service development.

Methodology

Scoping Review Framework

This review will follow the scoping review framework developed by Arksey and O'Malley, which includes identifying the research question, locating relevant studies, selecting eligible studies, charting data, and summarizing findings thematically.

Research Question

What key themes emerge from UK peer-reviewed literature on digital mental health interventions for children and young people?

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion: UK-based, peer-reviewed studies published in English within the last ten years, focusing on digital mental health interventions for CYP.

Exclusion: Non-UK studies, grey literature, and studies unrelated to mental health or digital interventions.

Data Collection and Analysis

A systematic search will be conducted using databases such as PubMed, CINAHL, and Scopus. Keywords will include “digital mental health,” “children,” “young people,” and “UK.” Data will be analyzed using Aveyard’s simplified thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes.

Expected Outcomes

The scoping review is expected to identify key thematic trends in digital mental health interventions for CYP in the UK and highlight evidence gaps to inform future research, policy, and practice.

Ethical Considerations

As this study is a secondary scoping review, no direct participants will be involved. Ethical practice will be maintained through accurate citation, avoidance of plagiarism, and transparent reporting of findings from ethically conducted studies.

References

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