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Constant mood monitoring using WhatsApp for persons with depression: a pilot study

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Abstract

Background

Preliminary evidence suggests that social media could provide a convenient platform to monitor mood. It is still unknown whether WhatsApp mood monitoring could be used to identify mood changes in adults.

Methods

A cohort study design was used in this study. The data is a part of the bigger study where psychological variables together with mobility data were collected using GPS (dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.5qpvory7bv4o/v1). Participants (N=32) with signs or a diagnosis of depression joined the study. The data were collected between 15 November 2018 and 30 September 2019. The participants were monitored daily for 14 days using WhatsApp. Depressive symptoms, perceived stress, mental well-being, self-esteem, and life satisfaction were collected at baseline and the end of a 14-days. The feasibility of constant monitoring was described as well.

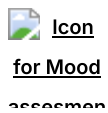
Results

Although participants' (N=31) mood status fluctuated, the analysis of ANOVA showed no significant difference in average mood levels during the 14-day period ($F=1.985$, $p=0.093$). The paired-sample t-test showed a significant improvement in self-esteem between baseline and follow-up ($t=3.978$, $p<0.001$).

Conclusion

WhatsApp could be used for constant mood monitoring as it is easy to use, and it was not found to have a negative impact on participants' psychological well-being. However, further research with more accurate methods and a larger sample size might be needed to identify patterns in mood changes and their link to well-being.

Attachments



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