BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS FROM COMMUNITY– DIGITAL INTEGRATION FOR COUNSELLING ACCESS IN SELANGOR

Rethinking mental health pathways in Malaysia



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Introduction

Community mental health services accessibility and professional help-seeking behaviours in Malaysia remains limited due to multiple sociocultural factors[1] including:-

- stigma
- low perceived need
- structural pathway barriers

Behavioural insights suggest that professional help-seeking is shaped by community social norms, the ease of convenience of access. as well as perceived trust to political and community leaders.

In response, Selangor state government has introduced the SEHAT initiative, a community counselling hub embedded within assemblymen service centres. Established initially in collaboration with PERKAMA counsellors in 2024 and later integrated with the SELANGKAH apps as global shifts towards digital platform in 2025 for mental health services[2].

Objective

This descriptive study aims to examine how community-digital integration influences professional help-seeking, service uptake, and user engagement, while generating behavioural insights to inform mental health policymakers.

Methodology

1. This study employed a descriptive study design within community-digital settings.
2. Data were collected through service utilisation using google registration form in 2024 and Selangkah registration data in 2025.
3. Study sample comprised clients access across 9 state assemblymen counselling hubs in 2024 and additional digital integration in 2025, selected through convenience sampling.
4. Data analysis included descriptive and comparative statistical analysis of service and engagement metrics.
5. Behavioural mapping approach was applied to examine the professional help-seeking pathway.

Discussion

Findings indicate increased engagement through improved accessibility across 9 SEHAT Counsellor Hubs. Familiar community settings reduced stigma and enhanced trust, facilitating initial help-seeking. Integration of the SELANGKAH platform further improved engagement, particularly in appointment scheduling, follow-up, and continuity of care, while reducing administrative burden.

2024		2025
SEHAT Counsellor Hubs	+	**SELANGKAH Apps Platform**
This model of intervention reduce stigma on mental health care by:- • Community activation • Trust & visibility • Political authority/leaders • Health volunteers training		The digital integration • Follow-up continuity • Digital visibility • Reduce administration • Data analysis & Reporting

Table 1. Hybrid Community–Digital Counselling Hub Model

Behavioral Mapping Approach

The Health Belief Model[3]

Perceived Threat

Perceived Susceptibility
Recognise on personal distress, social media exposure on mental health

Perceived Severity
Lack of professional access and knowledge on mental health

Evaluation of Behaviour

Perceived Barriers
Reduced stigma via community hub activation by local trust & familiarity

Perceived Benefits
Increased through accessible community location &digital convenience

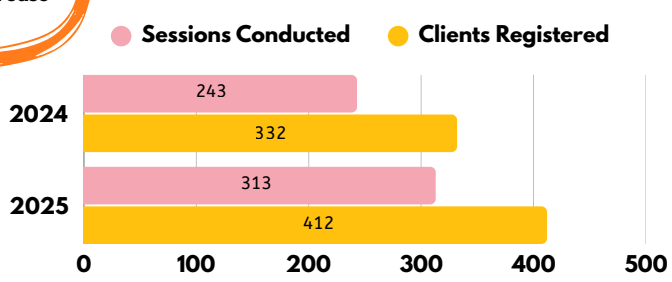
Self-Efficacy
Digital tools simplify booking and follow-up for users convenience access

Likehood of Behaviour
Comparative statistical analysis results *(Graph 1 and 2)* shows user engagement improvement

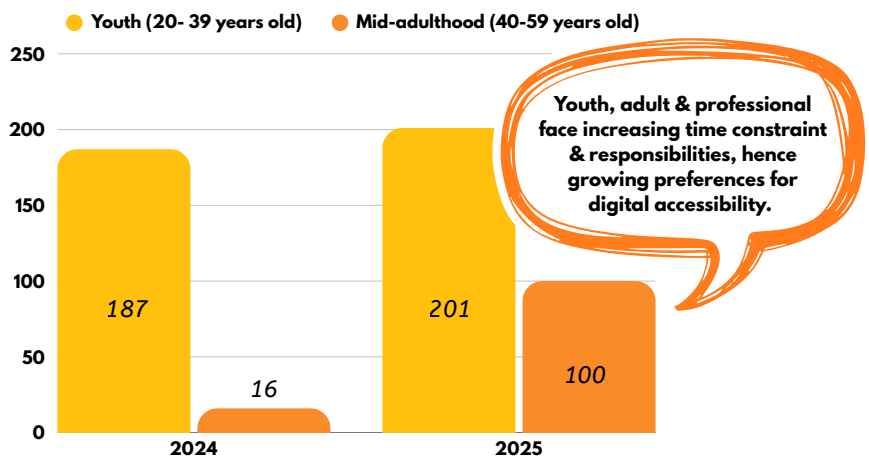
Cues to Action
Community visibility with trust in leadership figures and SELANGKAH platform

Results

Trusted local & familiar community activation helps in visibility, while digital integration helps in increase user retention.



Graph 1: Service users engagement



Graph 2: Age group engagement

Conclusion

The SEHAT community-SELANGKAH digital integration enhances mental health help-seeking by aligning with behavioural drivers of community trust, convenience accessibility, and continuity of care.

Acknowledgement

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