PEER REVIEW HISTORY

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ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Online Arts and culture for mental health in young people: A qualitative interview study
AUTHORS	Sheriff, Rebecca; Bergin, Laura; Bonsaver, Laura; Riga, Evgenia; O'Dell, Bessie; Adams, Helen; Glogowska, Margaret

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Rodwin, Aaron H. New York University
REVIEW RETURNED	01-Feb-2023

GENERAL COMMENTS	This is a well-written, thoughtful, and compelling manuscript that reports qualitative data related to online arts and culture in the context of youth mental health. It is innovative, timely, and relevant, particularly in the era of Covid-19 and the rise in telemental health services. Importantly, the authors bring attention to uncover underlying mechanisms of change, which remains a major gap in the literature. As someone who is avidly interested and passionate about creative arts strategies to improve mental health and recovery for young people, I read this manuscript with great interest. Below, I note several comments that I feel can help strengthen the overall quality and presentation of ideas in the manuscript. Introduction - Importantly, the authors note that 'only a minority of young people access professional help' -- perhaps worth extending this to capture that even when young people DO access care, they often disengage prematurely due to cognitive (e.g., stigma, mistrust) and structural (e.g., insurance, cost, transportation). - Very good introduction, clear rationale, and clear argument as to why alternative and complementary approaches are important. I commend the authors for acknowledging and discuss underlying mechanisms of change as this is often left out of the literature. Methods - The authors use the term young people to capture 16-24 year olds. This approach seems reasonable but I wonder if 'transition age youth' or 'adolescents and young adults' might be more fitting? Perhaps the authors should consider one of these as it brings a bit more specificity. Or, if the authors have a rationale for their current terminology, it would be useful to provide it and reference it - Purposeful sampling to specifically include what types of participants? Participants with higher levels of distress and symptoms based on K10? Perhaps this can be clarified.

- Were the interviews transcribed manually by the researchers? Using software? Transcriptionist? This information might be worth noting for specificity.

Results
- Overall, it seems that the structure of the results section could be improved to enhance the overall readability. For example, perhaps consider introducing the results section by noting that X number qual themes emerged from the analyses including XYZ. This would give the reader more structure and present the ideas in a more digestible way.

- I appreciate table 3 and it is indeed very informative, as it captures many dimensions such as mechanisms, outcomes, etc. However, I find the presentation of themes in table 3 to be inconsistent with the presentation of themes in the text. On page 7, the authors note "themes and subthemes were generated…" And then, based on table 3, I am having trouble distinguishing themes vs. subthemes. For example, is "Benefits of Online" a 'theme' and "Flexible engagement" is a subtheme that falls within the larger theme? Or is "flexible engagement" a theme? It is a bit confusing since column 2 is labeled "themes" so I am l not clear on where the subthemes are noted. Forgive me if I misinterpreted, and perhaps the authors can clarify this so that the description in the text is consistent with how it is presented in the table.

- Similarly, in the table, 'benefits of online' and 'flexible engagement' (themes/subthemes) are noted first yet the first subheading of the results section on page 10 is "arts and culture for mental health" which I don't see listed in the table. I find this incongruence confusing and challenging to follow. In contrast, the 'mechanisms' section of the table is consistent with how it is presented in the text on page 17 (e.g., subheadings for relatability, reflection, etc) – this is very clear and makes sense. Perhaps the authors refine such that the results table and text use the same terminology and themes are presented in the same order so they match? Or, a sentence or two clarifying this process would be helpful.

- While I do not have expertise in thematic analysis, it seems that the themes can be strengthened by including more quotations that speak to the various themes. Currently, most themes only contain one exemplar quotation. Including one exemplar quotation in the table makes sense but, in the text, more empirical data elements could strengthen it in my opinion. If the authors feel otherwise, then perhaps they can provide a sentence or two in the methods explaining why only 1 quote is used to provide evidence for the themes. As a reader, I would like to see more quotations (e.g., 3-4, if possible) that make up the themes presented.

- Similarly, there are a lot of themes, yet the authors mostly provide 1 (in some cases 2) quotation as evidence for each of these themes. This raises a question for me as to whether there is substantial evidence (i.e., multiple quotations) that support each of the themes or whether some of the themes are simply based on 1 participant's quotation. If I am misunderstanding anything related to the specific methods followed by the authors then perhaps more clarification would be sufficient. Some discussion and clarity, and potential refinement, around this, can strengthen the manuscript.

- Very powerful quotations and themes related to mechanisms and great that the authors included this in their analysis. These quotes and themes provide a deep sense related to the how which I think have important implications for developing targeted approaches.

- The authors note "other mechanisms included learning, witnessing creativity, and escapism" – is there a reason why these themes are not presented in detail in the text, similar to everything else? If possible, this seems relevant to present in the same way all the other themes are depicted.

- The 'Outcomes' section seems underdeveloped compared to the depth of the author sections of results. Perhaps the authors can include more descriptions and quotations for each of the themes presented related to outcomes. I think this would strengthen the presentation of results and give readers more context.

- In table 2, why does participant "Tom" age say "18-24" This seems more like an age range?

Discussion
- Perhaps the authors could begin the discussion with a summary of the findings and foreground some key takeaways before getting into specific results. In addition, it could be strengthened if the authors add a bit more about how their findings fit into the existing literature and engage a bit more 'meaning-making' of the findings.
- The authors note, "this has important implications to optimize and test cultural resources for mental health" in the implications section – perhaps the authors can be a bit more specific as to what they mean by this and provide an example to flesh out these ideas more?
- As is the case in all research, it is important to acknowledge and discuss limitations. This seems to be underdeveloped and perhaps the authors can acknowledge and discuss a few limitations of the study towards the end of the paper?
- I would reframe the first sentence of the implications to something like "… many young people described and articulated how their connections to cultural assets on a personal level impacted their mental health…" The current language seems to imply a bit more causality and generalizability.

REVIEWER	Hodgins, Michael
	UNSW
REVIEW RETURNED	08-Feb-2023

GENERAL COMMENTS	Thank you for you the opportunity to review your paper Arts and culture online for mental health in young people: A qualitative interview study. I found the study well defined, with an important aim and potential contribution to the literature. However, I have some suggestion that I feel will strengthen the contribution this paper will make.
	My foremost suggestion concerns the results section. As it stands, your results could be better organised. I think table 3 is an excellent way of providing an overview but you can't use the table to supplement deeper analysis and description of findings. This might include comparing different participant perspectives of, for instance, engagement online, just as an example. Also, I think what's lacking from the results is more insight into how we might implement OAC. That should be the cornerstone of your results - the outcomes are positive, so how do we action the

intervention(s)? What are the barriers to engagement based on your data? what are the enablers? This makes your findings much more relevant and applicable to future research. My suggested restructuring of the results (just a suggestion) would include three sections, responding to the questions:

• What is OAC and how do participants describe it (is that the same as your definition? If not why not?) (Aligns with existing 'Mechanisms' and 'Ingredients' sections)

• What is the result of OAC engagement according to participants ('Outcomes')?

• What are the lessons for future implementation of OAC ('Engagement' & 'Benefits')?

This way, your results avoid becoming repetitive as each section engages with a different question and can follow sub themes relating to different perspectives within the data.

Additional minor comments:

Introduction

• You need to define OAC in the introduction of the paper – I was unsure what fitted within the scope of OAC. This impacts your findings as your definition may not necessarily align with participants.

Methods

• I would have liked more details about the survey, namely how was it delivered and to who.

• Missing comma page 5, line 33 after 'accessible'.

• Page 8, line 35-6 provide examples of how a bidirectional understanding of the language/experience relationship affected your analysis.

• Page 8, line 40, how did you balance the deductive and inductive analysis. What was your deductive framework? How did you supplement it with inductive approach?

• Page 8, line 53, how was the description of themes presented to participants and what was the result of this presentation? Any revised themes/subthemes?

Results

• My opening comments detail the most pressing required change for your results.

• Make sure your heading formatting/levels are all the same. Bold for overarching themes and italics for subthemes. It is currently inconsistent. The left-hand column of table 3 should be the structure of your headings (themes). This gives you an opportunity to flesh out the sub themes within each with prose and provide the read with a picture of the what your interpretation of the dataset is as a whole.

• Page 11, line 33, avoid using quotes by the same participants one after the other. You need to use your data to show this theme was common across the dataset. Or if it wasn't common, explain why it's important to share here.

• For each of your themes you need you to ease the reader into them. In the opening few sentences provide us an overview of what the theme/sub theme is about and explain its relevance across your whole dataset.

• The 'Outcomes' theme was very short and needs to be fleshed out with reference to your table 3.

Discussion

• Page 19, line 22-26, Why is this important? Add the 'so what' for this finding.

Overall, I think this is a good paper that needs some refining. Please feel free to reach out if you would like to chat about my suggestions.

REVIEWER	Dhital, Ranjita
	University College London, UCL Arts and Sciences
REVIEW RETURNED	20-Feb-2023

GENERAL COMMENTS	This is a well written paper which explores engagement of online arts and cultural resources to promote mental health in young people. The study adds to the potential of online creative resources for young people's mental health for communities and future research.
	Abstract: Could add more clarity by specifying number of participants involved in the study, and in the results section name the themes identified from the reflexive TA.
	Introduction: Good background on the subject area. However, it mentions no trials have evaluated the effectiveness of online arts and cultural interventions. Perhaps this description could have been expanded to explore if traditional RCTs could ever be appropriate for some types of arts and cultural interventions, and suggest other intervention designs where this could indeed be useful to examine in trials. These ideas could have been followed up in the discussion i.e.,specifying the types of future research needed in this area.
	Check references, 24 and 26 they are the same?
	Method: Could have provided rationale on why K10 scale was used for the initial online survey, and benefits and limitations explored in the discussion. Was there inclusion criteria set for K10 scale, i.e., 16 and above for moderate distress?
	There is mention of PPI, however, it's not clear how individuals were involved or contributed to the study design, topic guide and interpretation of results. Their participation remains unclear. It is mentioned there were 'PPI interviews'. Exploratory discussions could have yielded richer and meaningful insights.
	It's described a diverse research team were involved in the study (1st paragraph, page 8). Initials of other members of the research team could have been acknowledged, as well as the 'silent observers'.
	Some of the sample questions in Table 1 seem leading, esp. asking participants 'what has helped' rather than exploring experiences with an open mind. Not sure if the final topic guide included these questions?
	Results: It was not clear what or how many themes were identified from the analysis. This could have been summarised at the beginning of the results section. Table 3 is confusing; the table title lists 5 themes but under the column heading 'themes' it appears to include 'sub-themes'?
	The titles of the themes could be fuller to give richer context on its own right i.e., 'outcomes' 'mechanism' are not appropriate names for themes.
	I'm not sure how well Table 3 works, perhaps remove it. Might be better to include details of the scope of the themes to the main body of the text rather than keep these insights within a table.

| | Currently the themes feel split between the table and the main text.

Discussion: The discussion was generally well written. However, could have highlighted next steps and any future work planned. I couldn't see limitations about the study. Thoughts on the knowledge gap and methodological approaches presented in the introduction could have been expanded in the discussion. |
|---|---|

VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer: 1
Dr. Aaron H. Rodwin, New York University

Comments to the Author:
This is a well-written, thoughtful, and compelling manuscript that reports qualitative data related to online arts and culture in the context of youth mental health. It is innovative, timely, and relevant, particularly in the era of Covid-19 and the rise in telemental health services. Importantly, the authors bring attention to uncover underlying mechanisms of change, which remains a major gap in the literature. As someone who is avidly interested and passionate about creative arts strategies to improve mental health and recovery for young people, I read this manuscript with great interest. Below, I note several comments that I feel can help strengthen the overall quality and presentation of ideas in the manuscript.

Thank you

Introduction
-       Importantly, the authors note that 'only a minority of young people access professional help' -- perhaps worth extending this to capture that even when young people DO access care, they often disengage prematurely due to cognitive (e.g., stigma, mistrust) and structural (e.g., insurance, cost, transportation).

Thank you. We agree. Please see additional text and references on page 3.
-       Very good introduction, clear rationale, and clear argument as to why alternative and complementary approaches are important. I commend the authors for acknowledging and discuss underlying mechanisms of change as this is often left out of the literature.

Thank you

Methods
-       The authors use the term young people to capture 16-24 year olds. This approach seems reasonable but I wonder if 'transition age youth' or 'adolescents and young adults' might be more fitting? Perhaps the authors should consider one of these as it brings a bit more specificity. Or, if the authors have a rationale for their current terminology, it would be useful to provide it and reference it

This was used as the preferred term from young people themselves as discussed with PPI. This is now added under PPI

'as well as the preferred term for the target population as 'young people'.'
-       Purposeful sampling to specifically include what types of participants? Participants with higher levels of distress and symptoms based on K10? Perhaps this can be clarified.

This sentence has now been added in the methods section

'Purposeful sampling was used to gain an information rich sample that varied socio-demographically and in level of psychological distress, as measured by the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) [30] in the survey;.
-    Were the interviews transcribed manually by the researchers? Using software? Transcriptionist? This information might be worth noting for specificity.

Thank you. We agree. This has now been added under procedure

'Interviews were transcribed verbatim manually by the researchers'

Results

-    Overall, it seems that the structure of the results section could be improved to enhance the

overall readability. For example, perhaps consider introducing the results section by noting that X

number qual themes emerged from the analyses including XYZ. This would give the reader more

structure and present the ideas in a more digestible way.

Thank you. We agree. We have now totally rewritten the results section and Table 3 in response to peer review comments and agree that changes were needed to make this section more understandable to the reader.

-    I appreciate table 3 and it is indeed very informative, as it captures many dimensions such as mechanisms, outcomes, etc. However, I find the presentation of themes in table 3 to be inconsistent with the presentation of themes in the text. On page 7, the authors note "themes and subthemes were generated…" And then, based on table 3, I am having trouble distinguishing themes vs. subthemes. For example, is "Benefits of Online" a 'theme' and "Flexible engagement" is a subtheme that falls within the larger theme? Or is "flexible engagement" a theme? It is a bit confusing since column 2 is labeled "themes" so I am l not clear on where the subthemes are noted. Forgive me if I misinterpreted, and perhaps the authors can clarify this so that the description in the text is consistent with how it is presented in the table.

Thank you. We agree. We have realised that the heading titles on the originally submitted table were not clear and the themes are indeed the furthest left column. We have rewritten this section so that the themes are more clearly described and the text and table follow the same structure for clarity

-    Similarly, in the table, 'benefits of online' and 'flexible engagement' (themes/subthemes) are noted first yet the first subheading of the results section on page 10 is "arts and culture for mental health" which I don't see listed in the table. I find this incongruence confusing and challenging to follow. In contrast, the 'mechanisms' section of the table is consistent with how it is presented in the text on page 17 (e.g., subheadings for relatability, reflection, etc) – this is very clear and makes sense. Perhaps the authors refine such that the results table and text use the same terminology and themes are presented in the same order so they match? Or, a sentence or two clarifying this process would be helpful.
thanks for this comment. These have now been clarified as suggested

- While I do not have expertise in thematic analysis, it seems that the themes can be strengthened by including more quotations that speak to the various themes. Currently, most themes only contain one exemplar quotation. Including one exemplar quotation in the table makes sense but, in the text, more empirical data elements could strengthen it in my opinion. If the authors feel otherwise, then perhaps they can provide a sentence or two in the methods explaining why only 1 quote is used to provide evidence for the themes. As a reader, I would like to see more quotations (e.g., 3-4, if possible) that make up the themes presented.

Thank you. We agree. Themes now have at least 3-4 quotes and are described fully in the text, the table also follows the same order of themes and subthemes to aid the reader and an exemplary quote to add to the evidence (not duplicated)

- Similarly, there are a lot of themes, yet the authors mostly provide 1 (in some cases 2) quotation as evidence for each of these themes. This raises a question for me as to whether there is substantial evidence (i.e., multiple quotations) that support each of the themes or whether some of the themes are simply based on 1 participant's quotation. If I am misunderstanding anything related to the specific methods followed by the authors then perhaps more clarification would be sufficient. Some discussion and clarity, and potential refinement, around this, can strengthen the manuscript.

Thank you. We agree. As above, apologies for the confusion introduced by the previously poorly labelled table

- Very powerful quotations and themes related to mechanisms and great that the authors included this in their analysis. These quotes and themes provide a deep sense related to the how which I think have important implications for developing targeted approaches.

Thank you

- The authors note "other mechanisms included learning, witnessing creativity, and escapism" – is there a reason why these themes are not presented in detail in the text, similar to everything else? If possible, this seems relevant to present in the same way all the other themes are depicted.

Thank you. We agree. These are now fully described

- The 'Outcomes' section seems underdeveloped compared to the depth of the author sections of results. Perhaps the authors can include more descriptions and quotations for each of the themes presented related to outcomes. I think this would strengthen the presentation of results and give readers more context.

Thank you. We agree. These are now fully described

- In table 2, why does participant "Tom" age say "18-24" This seems more like an age range?

Thank you. We agree. We have put in an age range for all participants due to the journal concern about identifiability

Discussion
- Perhaps the authors could begin the discussion with a summary of the findings and foreground some key takeaways before getting into specific results. In addition, it could be strengthened if the authors add a bit more about how their findings fit into the existing literature and engage a bit more 'meaning-making' of the findings.

Thank you. We agree. This has now been changed. Please see first paragraph of the discussion

- The authors note, "this has important implications to optimize and test cultural resources for mental health" in the implications section – perhaps the authors can be a bit more specific as to what they mean by this and provide an example to flesh out these ideas more? Thank you. We agree. This has been added to the implication section

'*Thus, future OAC projects could consider integrating human stories, as well as diversity and representation and alternative viewpoints into their catalogue of offerings – as their inclusion could help to optimise online and cultural resources for mental health (even where that is not the primary aim of the OAC being offered).*'

- As is the case in all research, it is important to acknowledge and discuss limitations. This seems to be underdeveloped and perhaps the authors can acknowledge and discuss a few limitations of the study towards the end of the paper?

A limitations section has now been added towards the end of the paper

- I would reframe the first sentence of the implications to something like "… many young people described and articulated how their connections to cultural assets on a personal level impacted their mental health…" The current language seems to imply a bit more causality and generalizability.

We agree. Amended as suggested

Reviewer: 2
Dr. Michael Hodgins, UNSW

Comments to the Author:
Dear Authors,
Thank you for you the opportunity to review your paper Arts and culture online for mental health in young people: A qualitative interview study. I found the study well defined, with an important aim and potential contribution to the literature. However, I have some suggestion that I feel will strengthen the contribution this paper will make.
My foremost suggestion concerns the results section. As it stands, your results could be better organised. I think table 3 is an excellent way of providing an overview but you can't use the table to supplement deeper analysis and description of findings. This might include comparing different participant perspectives of, for instance, engagement online, just as an example. Also, I think what's lacking from the results is more insight into how we might implement OAC. That should be the cornerstone of your results - the outcomes are positive, so how do we action the intervention(s)? What are the barriers to engagement based on your data? what are the enablers? This makes your findings much more relevant and applicable to future research. My suggested restructuring of the results (just a suggestion) would include three sections, responding to the questions:
• What is OAC and how do participants describe it (is that the same as your definition? If not why not?) (Aligns with existing 'Mechanisms' and 'Ingredients' sections)
• What is the result of OAC engagement according to participants ('Outcomes')?
• What are the lessons for future implementation of OAC ('Engagement' & 'Benefits')?
This way, your results avoid becoming repetitive as each section engages with a different question and can follow sub themes relating to different perspectives within the data.

We agree it was confusing. We have revised the Table and results in line with peer review comments.

Additional minor comments:
Introduction
• You need to define OAC in the introduction of the paper – I was unsure what fitted within the scope of OAC. This impacts your findings as your definition may not necessarily align with participants.

Thank you, we agree. The following definition is now included in the introduction

As per the survey, arts and culture is defined as content provided by cultural institutions, such as museums, theatres, art galleries, libraries, archives and natural heritage organisations.[29] Online arts and culture is defined as arts and cultural content that is digitally accessible via the internet.
Methods
• I would have liked more details about the survey, namely how was it delivered and to who.

Thank you. We agree. We have now described the procedures for the survey here and have referenced the open access, peer reviewed paper that described the survey in more detail
• Missing comma page 5, line 33 after 'accessible'.

Added. Thank you
• Page 8, line 35-6 provide examples of how a bidirectional understanding of the language/experience relationship affected your analysis.

Recurrence of terms as well as the meaningfulness of described phenomena was pivotal to informing the thematic analysis. For example, the term 'distraction' was used repeatedly throughout the dataset, however its meaning varied from a shift in focus, to feeling entertained, to disrupting negative thought patterns, therefore themes were revised to more clearly reflect the phenomenon described rather than the language used per se. In addition, the analysis less reflected the repetition of phenomena but the meaningfulness applied to phenomena.
• Page 8, line 40, how did you balance the deductive and inductive analysis. What was your deductive framework? How did you supplement it with inductive approach?

Whilst a framework based on thoughts, feelings and behaviors was originally envisaged to frame the analysis this was challenged somewhat by the phenomena described by the young people that did not fit clearly into this framework, particularly the descriptions of what was helpful, for example, human connection which involved a combination of thoughts, feelings and behaviors. We have added the following

'Whilst a framework based on thoughts, feelings and behaviours was a starting point for sense making of the data, the analysis itself became more deductive in its approach as we progressed'
• Page 8, line 53, how was the description of themes presented to participants and what was the result of this presentation? Any revised themes/subthemes?
We agree, and the following has been added

'The participants preferred mode of communication for the presentation of themes was via email. Participants were in agreement with the themes and it was not necessary to revise themes in response participant feedback.'

• My opening comments detail the most pressing required change for your results.

- Make sure your heading formatting/levels are all the same. Bold for overarching themes and italics for subthemes. It is currently inconsistent. The left-hand column of table 3 should be the structure of your headings (themes). This gives you an opportunity to flesh out the sub themes within each with prose and provide the read with a picture of the what your interpretation of the dataset is as a whole.
- Page 11, line 33, avoid using quotes by the same participants one after the other. You need to use your data to show this theme was common across the dataset. Or if it wasn't common, explain why it's important to share here.

Thank you. This section has been revised in response to peer review comments
- For each of your themes you need you to ease the reader into them. In the opening few sentences provide us an overview of what the theme/sub theme is about and explain its relevance across your whole dataset.

Thank you. This section has been revised in response to peer review comments
- The 'Outcomes' theme was very short and needs to be fleshed out with reference to your table 3.

Thank you. This section has been revised in response to peer review comments
Discussion
- Page 19, line 22-26, Why is this important? Add the 'so what' for this finding.

Thank you. We have added the following

'These findings suggest that future OAC initiatives could benefit from, rather than seek to avoid, material which is perceived as 'triggering.' Instead, such material could potentially be included – in consultation with users and relevant stakeholders'.

Overall, I think this is a good paper that needs some refining. Please feel free to reach out if you would like to chat about my suggestions.
Kind regards,
Michael Hodgins
That's very kind. Your suggestions have been really helpful in improving the paper

Reviewer: 3
Dr. Ranjita Dhital, University College London

Comments to the Author:
This is a well written paper which explores engagement of online arts and cultural resources to promote mental health in young people. The study adds to the potential of online creative resources for young people's mental health for communities and future research.

Abstract: Could add more clarity by specifying number of participants involved in the study, and in the results section name the themes identified from the reflexive TA.

Very good point. Added. Thank you

Introduction: Good background on the subject area. However, it mentions no trials have evaluated the effectiveness of online arts and cultural interventions. Perhaps this description could have been expanded to explore if traditional RCTs could ever be appropriate for some types of arts and cultural interventions, and suggest other intervention designs where this could indeed be useful to examine in trials. These ideas could have been followed up in the

discussion i.e.,specifying the types of future research needed in this area. Thank you. We agree. This has been added in the discussion

Further mixed methods research is needed to fully elucidate these research gaps in an age targeted way paying attention to underrepresented groups.

Check references, 24 and 26 they are the same?
Thank you. We agree. Yes, now amended

Method: Could have provided rationale on why K10 scale was used for the initial online survey, and benefits and limitations explored in the discussion. Was there inclusion criteria set for K10 scale, i.e., 16 and above for moderate distress?

Thank you. We agree. We have included some overview of the online survey and a link to open access paper which is openly published and peer reviewed

There is mention of PPI, however, it's not clear how individuals were involved or contributed to the study design, topic guide and interpretation of results. Their participation remains unclear. It is mentioned there were 'PPI interviews'. Exploratory discussions could have yielded richer and meaningful insights.

Thank you, we have added the following

'PPI were involved via exploratory discussions and stakeholder meetings.'

It's described a diverse research team were involved in the study (1st paragraph, page 8). Initials of other members of the research team could have been acknowledged, as well as the 'silent observers'.

This has been added

Some of the sample questions in Table 1 seem leading, esp. asking participants 'what has helped' rather than exploring experiences with an open mind. Not sure if the final topic guide included these questions?

Yes, we were mainly asking about helpfulness and optimisation (rather than potential negative effects/harms) as reflected in the topic guide. Whilst these were touched on there was not a full exploration

In response, we have added this as a limitation

Results: It was not clear what or how many themes were identified from the analysis. This could have been summarised at the beginning of the results section. Table 3 is confusing; the table title lists 5 themes but under the column heading 'themes' it appears to include 'sub-themes'?

Thank you. We agree. This has been clarified

The titles of the themes could be fuller to give richer context on its own right i.e., 'outcomes' 'mechanism' are not appropriate names for themes.

We have made these clearer

I'm not sure how well Table 3 works, perhaps remove it. Might be better to include details of the scope of the themes to the main body of the text rather than keep these insights within a table. Currently the themes feel split between the table and the main text.

Thank you- This has been totally redone, as suggested

Discussion: The discussion was generally well written. However, could have highlighted next steps and any future work planned. I couldn't see limitations about the study. Thoughts on the knowledge gap and methodological approaches presented in the introduction could have been expanded in the discussion.

We have now added this, under implications

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Rodwin, Aaron H. New York University
REVIEW RETURNED	17-Apr-2023

GENERAL COMMENTS	This revision addresses all the main concerns raised in the initial review and the manuscript reads nicely and makes an important contribution. A few small minor things that remain include the following:
	1) In the abstract, the themes do not all match the table and results. For example, the abstracts notes 'mechanisms' whereas the table notes 'mechanisms of impact.' Similarly, the abstract notes 'outcomes' whereas the table and results notes, 'mental health outcomes.' It would be enhanced if this is clarified and consistent throughout the manuscript.
	2) On page 4, line 22, the authors note "it is generally accepted that culture and the arts are good for mental health and wellbeing" and provide relevant citations. However, the authors might consider citing one of the largest reports from the WHO to further strengthen their argument:
	Fancourt, D., & Finn, S. (2019). What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe.
	3) The authors note, 'Interviews were transcribed verbatim manually by the researchers. Does this mean ALL the authors/researchers participated in transcription? Or just a few? I think simply stating a specific number is important as it gives the reader a sense of how many people were involved in the process.
	4) The results section is much clearer now and identifying the number of emergent themes is useful. Similarly, if the authors can also report the subthemes (similar to how they reported the

| | number of primary themes), it would provide more specificity, consistency, and clarity from the onset. This level of detail would be useful for readers.

5) The second theme in the table says, 'online engagement' but in the text (line 1 page 15) the subheading reads, 'online arts and culture.' I imagine these are referring to the same thing but reporting them, in the same way, would help with consistency and avoid misinterpretation.

6) The authors note (page 17, line 22), "There was a variety of ways in which OAC was described as impacting on mental health." I think the authors mean to say "…as have an impact on mental health." |
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REVIEWER	Hodgins, Michael UNSW
REVIEW RETURNED	25-Apr-2023

GENERAL COMMENTS	I am content with the authors response to my initial feedback. Well done!

REVIEWER	Dhital, Ranjita University College London, UCL Arts and Sciences
REVIEW RETURNED	18-Apr-2023

| GENERAL COMMENTS | Thank you for the revised and much improved manuscript. The themes are much clearer, and provide a richer insight of participants' perceptions and thoughts. Please see a couple of points below. I'm happy to accept the submission without requiring a further review.

Method:
Under the subheading 'qualitative interviews' 3rd paragraph the number of researchers involved in the study is not consistent with the text. It's mentioned RJSS conducted the interviews with one other interviewer, but three initials are mentioned, and instead of four silent observers there appears to be five? Please check.
"All interviews were conducted by RJSS and one other interviewer (HA, JR, LBo), with up to four silent observers (LBe, LBo, BO, JR, HA) to take field notes and to ensure documentation of non-verbal cues and accurate transcribing of interviews."

Results:
Please use consistent names for themes. The updated wordings for the theme names in table 3 differ from other parts of the manuscript, including in the abstract. Please check the wording for themes and sub-themes are consistent throughout.

Other points:
Best to avoid terms such as 'ethnic minority', 'minority groups' and instead use terms such as 'cultural diversity', 'ethnic diversity' and specify what is meant by a 'minority group' within the context of this study.
Few participants based outside the UK have been recruited to the study, therefore the term 'ethic minority' is not appropriate within this global context nor for the BMJ Open's international readership. |
| --- | --- |

	The clarification regarding the topic guide questions i.e., only exploring the positive aspects of OAC is appropriate, as this has now been explained, rationale provided and described in the limitations.

VERSION 2 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer: 1

Dr. Aaron H. Rodwin, New York University

Comments to the Author:

This revision addresses all the main concerns raised in the initial review and the manuscript reads nicely and makes an important contribution. A few small minor things that remain include the following:

1)In the abstract, the themes do not all match the table and results. For example, the abstracts notes 'mechanisms' whereas the table notes 'mechanisms of impact.' Similarly, the abstract notes 'outcomes' whereas the table and results notes, 'mental health outcomes.' It would be enhanced if this is clarified and consistent throughout the manuscript.

Thank you, we agree. The theme names now match across the Table, Abstract and main text

2) On page 4, line 22, the authors note "it is generally accepted that culture and the arts are good for mental health and wellbeing" and provide relevant citations. However, the authors might consider citing one of the largest reports from the WHO to further strengthen their argument:

Thank you, we agree. This has now been added.

Fancourt, D., & Finn, S. (2019). What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe.

3) The authors note, 'Interviews were transcribed verbatim manually by the researchers. Does this mean ALL the authors/researchers participated in transcription? Or just a few? I think simply stating a specific number is important as it gives the reader a sense of how many people were involved in the process.

Thank you, we agree. The following has now been added.

'Interviews were transcribed verbatim manually by two of the researchers.'

4) The results section is much clearer now and identifying the number of emergent themes is useful. Similarly, if the authors can also report the subthemes (similar to how they reported the number of primary themes), it would provide more specificity, consistency, and clarity from the onset. This level of detail would be useful for readers.

Thank you, we agree, we now report the subthemes under the theme headings

5) The second theme in the table says, 'online engagement' but in the text (line 1 page 15) the subheading reads, 'online arts and culture.' I imagine these are referring to the same thing but reporting them, in the same way, would help with consistency and avoid misinterpretation.

Thank you, we agree. This has now been clarified in the text to 'online engagement'.

6) The authors note (page 17, line 22), "There was a variety of ways in which OAC was described as impacting on mental health." I think the authors mean to say "…as have an impact on mental health."

Thank you, we agree. This has been changed to 'was described as having an impact on mental health'

Reviewer: 3

Dr. Ranjita Dhital, University College London

Comments to the Author:

Thank you for the revised and much improved manuscript. The themes are much clearer, and provide a richer insight of participants' perceptions and thoughts. Please see a couple of points below. I'm happy to accept the submission without requiring a further review.

Thank you

Method:

Under the subheading 'qualitative interviews' 3rd paragraph the number of researchers involved in the study is not consistent with the text. It's mentioned RJSS conducted the interviews with one other interviewer, but three initials are mentioned, and instead of four silent observers there appears to be five? Please check.

Thank you, we agree. This has been changed to the following

"All interviews were conducted by RJSS and one other interviewer (one of HA, JR or LBo), with up to four silent observers (LBe, LBo, BO, JR) to take field notes and to ensure documentation of non-verbal cues and accurate transcribing of interviews."

Results:

Please use consistent names for themes. The updated wordings for the theme names in table 3 differ from other parts of the manuscript, including in the abstract. Please check the wording for themes and sub-themes are consistent throughout.

Thank you, we agree. As per response to peer reviewer 1, the theme names now match across the Table, Abstract and main text

Other points:

Best to avoid terms such as 'ethnic minority', 'minority groups' and instead use terms such as 'cultural diversity', 'ethnic diversity' and specify what is meant by a 'minority group' within the context of this study.

Few participants based outside the UK have been recruited to the study, therefore the term 'ethic minority' is not appropriate within this global context nor for the BMJ Open's international readership.

Thank you, we agree. We have amended accordingly, for example

'Future research should expand to include an increasingly diverse study sample - including more perspectives from more underrepresented young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds and those from deprivation'

The clarification regarding the topic guide questions i.e., only exploring the positive aspects of OAC is appropriate, as this has now been explained, rationale provided and described in the limitations.

Thank you

Reviewer: 2

Dr. Michael Hodgins, UNSW

Comments to the Author:

I am content with the authors response to my initial feedback. Well done!