

COLLABORATING WITH YOUTH TO DISSEMINATE MHEALTH TECHNOLOGIES: INSIGHTS INTO THE MOTIVATION FOR JOINING AN AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

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01. BACKGROUND

Including youth in the development of mHealth technologies has been shown to improve satisfaction with mental health applications. However, little is known about collaborating with youth ambassadors to disseminate mHealth technologies.

02. OBJECTIVE

This qualitative analysis aimed to understand the motivations of students interested in becoming a mental health ambassador to introduce a mHealth program in their community.

03. METHODS

Data from 446 ambassador applications were analyzed to identify common characteristics and motivations for volunteering as a youth mental health ambassador. Students aged 14 and older applied via a public link on the company's website.

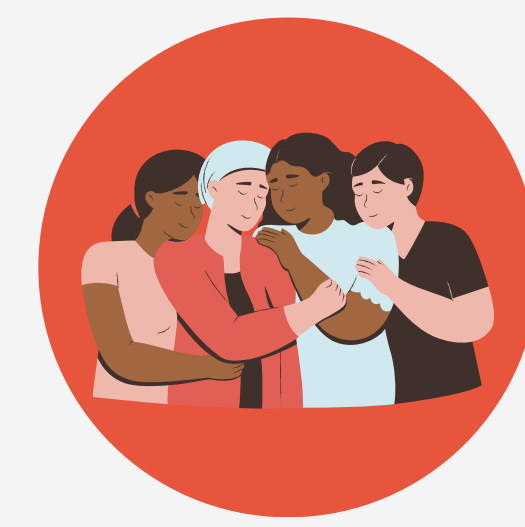
MAIN FINDINGS: SOCIETAL, PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY MOTIVATORS TO BE A MENTAL HEALTH AMBASSADOR



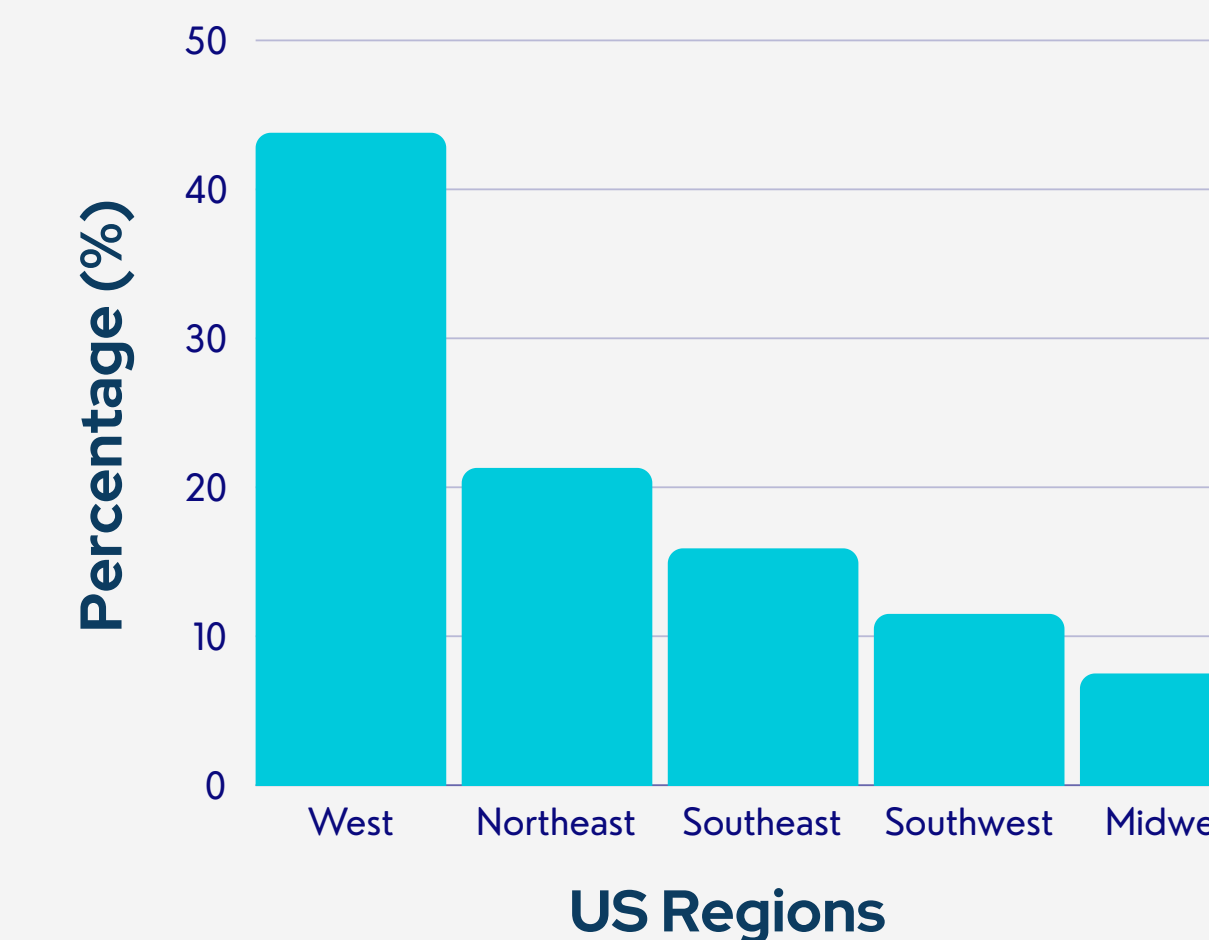
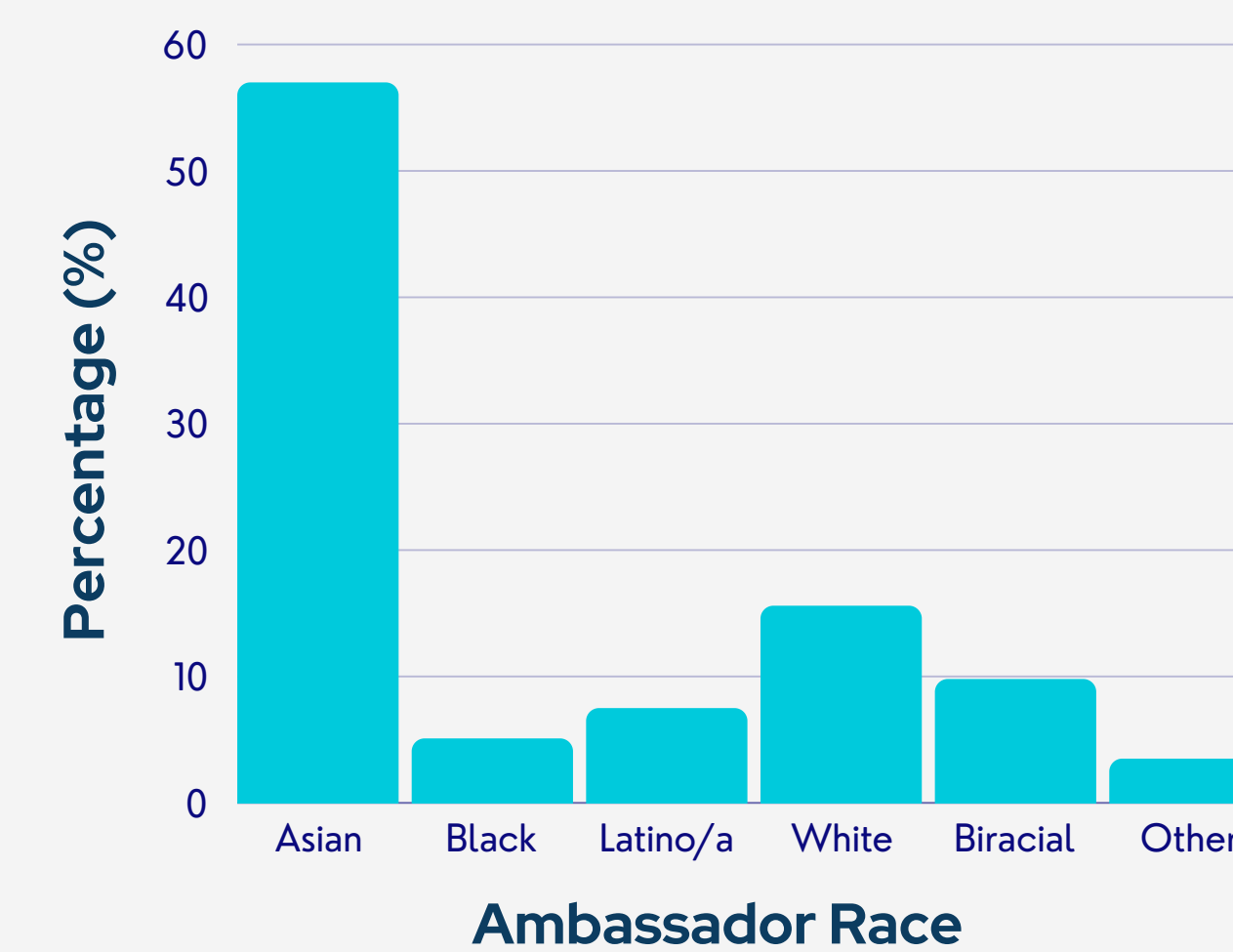
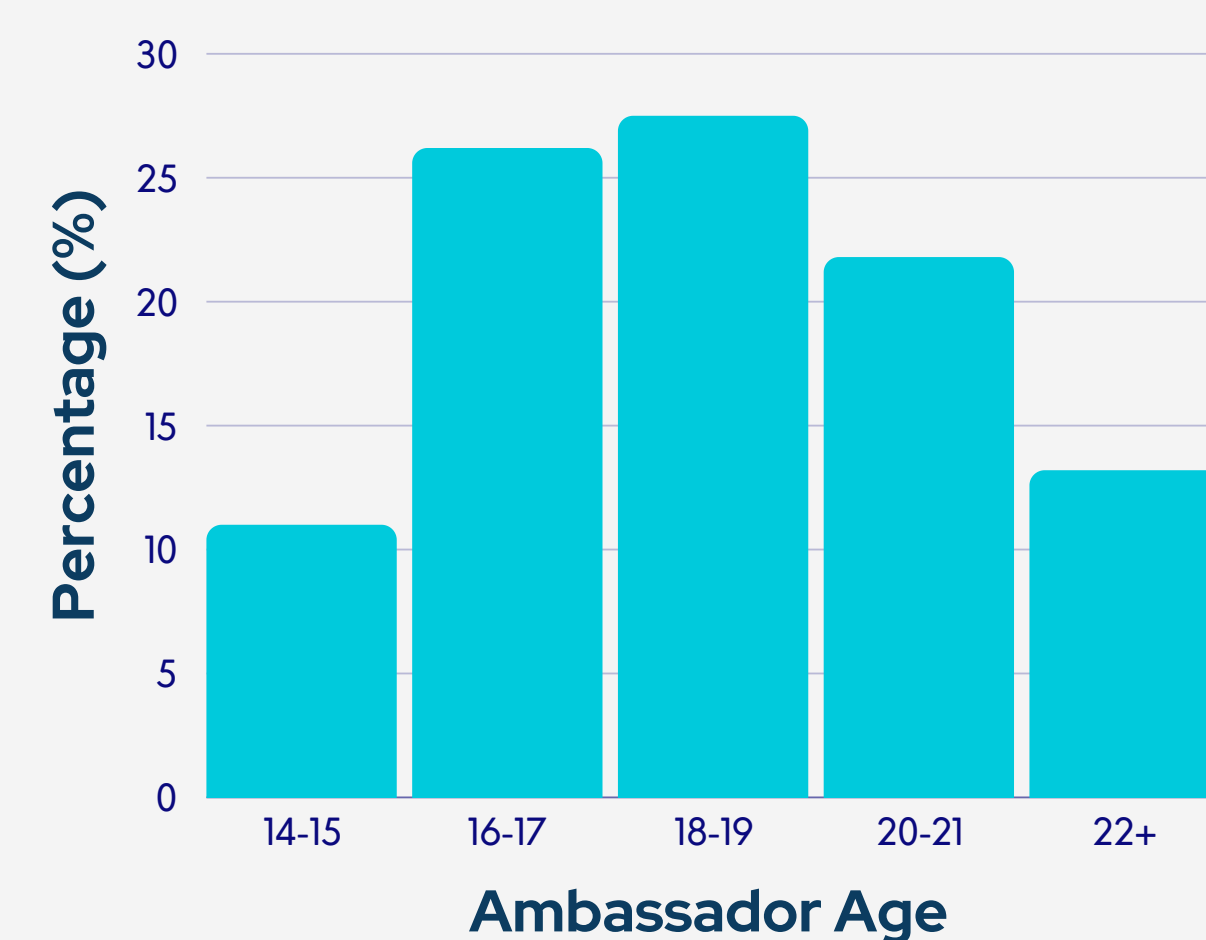
Society: Wanting to reduce global mental health stigma through advocacy, awareness and promotion of resources on a societal level (60.3%, N=269)



Personal Experiences: Having experienced mental health struggles themselves, or having witnessed a family member or friend experience mental health struggles (28.3%, N=126)



Community: Desire to engage in mental health promotion and resource sharing locally, within their school or town community (27.8%, N=124)



Why are you interested in Neolth's Student Ambassador Program?

I believe that joining this program would help me channel my passion into actions and mental health advocacy and thereby bring about a positive change in society.

As someone who has been battling mental health and its stigmatized culture for years, nothing would make me happier than providing helpful mental health resources to others who need it.

Being part of this program would enable me to make a meaningful difference in the lives of my peers, foster a culture of mental health care, and contribute to a healthier and happier university community.

04. RESULTS

The mean age of applicants was 18.54 yrs. (SD = 2.79). Most were located in the US (64.3%, N=287), spanning 31 states. 83.4% (N=372) identified as female, 12.1% (N=54) identified with the LGBTQ+ community, and 44.8% (N=200) identified as South Asian. The thematic analysis showed common motivations for volunteering as a youth mental health ambassador.

05. RESULTS [CONT.]

More than half stated a desire to participate in mental health advocacy on a societal level (60.3%, N=269). Others were driven by personal experiences with mental health (28.3%, N=126) and a desire to make a difference in their local community (27.8%, N=124). Students were motivated to become an ambassador based on recommendations from peers (32.5%, N=145), with some seeing the ambassadorship as a source of professional development (21.3%, N=95).

06. CONCLUSIONS

Applicants expressed a belief in the importance of mental health and breaking societal stigma. The desire for professional development was also prominent, indicating a commitment to personal growth and effective advocacy. Overall, there was enthusiasm for introducing an app-based program in their community, suggesting collaboration with youth ambassadors may be part of mHealth dissemination strategy.