



Telemedicine in Rural Zambia: A Comparative Study of Access and Utilization

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Abstract

Telemedicine platforms have emerged as a potential solution to improve access to healthcare services in rural areas of Zambia. The research employed a mixed-methods approach involving surveys, interviews with healthcare professionals, and focus group discussions with community members in both urban and rural areas of Zambia. Findings indicate that while telemedicine platforms are accessible to urban populations (85% had used at least one platform), only 40% of rural users reported having access to these services. Themes emerged around the need for improved infrastructure, affordability, and training among healthcare providers. The study underscores the significant disparities in telemedicine utilization between urban and rural settings in Zambia. Policy recommendations include investment in digital health infrastructure, subsidizing telemedicine fees, and enhancing training programmes for rural healthcare personnel.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, telehealth, ethnography, e-health, cross-cultural, qualitative, comparative*

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