



# Virtual Reality Therapy in Reducing Anxiety Among Rural Women in Zambia: Mixed Methods Six-Month Outcome Analysis

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## Abstract

Virtual reality (VR) therapy has shown promise in treating anxiety disorders globally, yet its effectiveness remains underexplored among rural populations in sub-Saharan Africa. A mixed methods study design was employed involving a randomized controlled trial (RCT) with pre-post measurements followed by qualitative interviews for deeper understanding. In the RCT, participants who received VR therapy reported a significant reduction in anxiety symptoms compared to controls ( $p < 0.05$ ). Qualitative data revealed that engagement and social support were key facilitators of treatment adherence. VR therapy appears promising for reducing anxiety among rural women in Zambia, with positive outcomes observed six months post-treatment. Further research should focus on scalability and cost-effectiveness of VR therapy, as well as developing community-based support networks to enhance long-term impact. Virtual Reality Therapy, Anxiety Reduction, Rural Women, Sub-Saharan Africa, Mixed Methods Study

**Keywords:** *African, VR, qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, anthropology, mental health*

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