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The Efficacy of Virtual Reality Therapy in Pain Management Compared to Traditional Pain Management Techniques

Andrea Espin*

Department of Computer Science, Bina Nusantara University, Palmerah, Jakarta, Indonesia

***Corresponding author:** Andrea Espin, Department of Computer Science, Bina Nusantara University, Palmerah, Jakarta, Indonesia; E-mail: espinandrea@binus.ac.id

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Description

Virtual Reality (VR) technology is a computer-generated simulation of an immersive three-dimensional environment that can be experienced through a headset or display screen. VR has emerged as a novel tool for pain management, providing a non-pharmacological alternative to traditional pain management techniques. Traditional pain management techniques such as medication and physical therapy have been effective in treating pain, but they also come with several side effects such as addiction, dependency, and risks of overdose.

Virtual reality therapy for pain management works by distracting the patient's mind from the pain they are experiencing. The immersive environment produced by VR can help reduce the patient's anxiety, improve their mood, and increase their pain tolerance. Virtual reality therapy can be used for different types of pain, including acute pain, chronic pain, and procedural pain. VR therapy is a safe and effective treatment option for pain management as it does not involve any medication.

Studies have shown that VR therapy can be effective in managing different types of pain. In a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) 30 burn patients were randomly assigned to receive either traditional pain management or VR therapy. The results of the study showed that patients who received VR therapy reported a significant reduction in pain compared to those who received traditional pain management. Moreover, the patients who received VR therapy reported less anxiety and required fewer pain medications.

Another study evaluated the effectiveness of VR therapy in managing chronic pain. In this study, 30 patients with chronic low back pain were randomly assigned to receive either traditional pain management or VR therapy. The results of the study showed that patients who received VR therapy reported a significant reduction in pain, anxiety, and depression compared to those who received traditional pain management.

Furthermore, VR therapy has been found to be effective in managing procedural pain and evaluated the use of VR therapy in managing procedural pain, including dental procedures; burn wound care, and venipuncture. It showed that VR therapy was effective in reducing pain and anxiety in the patients undergoing different types of procedures.

Although VR therapy has shown potential in pain management, it is not without limitations. VR therapy requires expensive equipment and specialized personnel to administer, making it less accessible in low-income settings. Moreover, VR therapy may not be suitable for patients with certain medical conditions, such as epilepsy and severe psychiatric disorders.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that virtual reality therapy is a emerging tool in pain management. Compared to traditional pain management techniques, virtual reality therapy has shown to provide greater pain reduction and an improved patient experience.

Virtual reality therapy has several advantages, it is non invasive, has no side effects,and can be customised to the individual needs of patients. Virtual therapy has been found to be effective in managing pain related to a variety of conditions, such as cancer, burn injuries, and chronic pain conditions like fibromyalgia.

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