USING VIRTUAL REALITY TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT MENTAL DISORDER AFFECTED PATIENTS

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Virtual reality is a computer technology that simulates the real world and provides user interaction with the virtual world. Mental disorders are a group of difficulties that affect the behavior and thinking of individuals. Virtual reality technology can be used to support cases affected by these disorders to return to normal life much quicker. This study reviews the studies in the field of virtual reality applications in the treatment of mental disorders.

Methods: Access to the papers was conducted through searching the PubMed database in April 2016. Data was extracted from related articles based on the type of used virtual reality technology and the year the study was done. Data analysis has been performed using descriptive statistics.

Results: The results of the final 26 articles showed that virtual reality technology is more used in the treatment of phobias (n=20). In most articles (n=11), the head mounted display (HMD) technology has been used to promptly encounter patients to the phobia-induced factor.

Conclusion: This study gives better view to health care providers and decision-makers for appropriate
and efficient use of virtual reality technology to support patients affected by different mental disorders.

KEYWORDS: Virtual reality, Mental disorder, Treatment