




Barriers and Facilitators to Using VR-Based Therapy for Emotional Regulation in Youth with Exceptional Needs

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “Traditional therapeutic interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) or talk-based counseling often require verbal fluency...” could benefit from citing more recent or diverse literature on the limitations of CBT for neurodiverse populations. Consider adding broader clinical context for non-verbal therapies.

The description of VR as “bypass[ing] language-heavy content” is compelling. However, the manuscript would be strengthened by integrating a brief mention of how this aligns with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles.

The quotation “The system allows us to slow down or repeat parts...” [P12] is strong. However, consider adding analysis on whether this adaptability led to more consistent outcomes across cases.

The section lacks specificity regarding which marginalized identities were underrepresented. Clarifying this (e.g., racial, linguistic, disability-related) would aid readers in understanding the scope of the problem.

You mention “technical issues often disrupted therapeutic flow”, but the manuscript does not explore whether participants had access to technical support or training. This could be explored briefly as a sub-barrier or moderator.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The paragraph beginning with “Despite these advantages...” outlines important barriers but lacks clarity on how these compare in impact. The authors could structure this paragraph around a hierarchy of constraints (e.g., systemic, individual-level, technical).

The manuscript states that the guide was based on existing literature but does not indicate if it was pilot-tested or validated. Consider briefly addressing how the instrument’s content validity was ensured.

While comprehensive, Table 1 would be more useful if it included example quotes to support key open codes. This would ground the themes in participant voice and increase transparency.

You write: “These observations align with previous research demonstrating the motivational effects of immersive media...” It would be beneficial to add a sentence linking this to theories of media engagement or behavioral activation to deepen theoretical integration.

The discussion of therapist control is insightful. Consider adding a brief reflection on how this aligns or conflicts with autonomy-supportive therapy frameworks in youth treatment.

The sentence “Parental education and at-home reinforcement of learned strategies...” would be stronger if supported by more specific examples or references to family-centered intervention models.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.