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Kristen Musacco

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, k.morgan@usa.edu

Susan MacDermott

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, smacdermott@usa.edu

Stephanie Stoltenberg

ErgoMage, steph.stoltenberg@ergomage.com

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Assessing the Needs and Barriers of Esports Players in Participating in Esports and Daily Life

Kristen Musacco, OTS; Susan MacDermott, OTD, OTR/L; Stephanie Stoltenberg, OTR/L, CEAS I, REAS I

BACKGROUND

Esports is a term used to describe sports played electronically, often associated with the term 'video game' (Walton et al., 2020). The majority of current research focused on health needs of esports players highlight mainly orthopedic concerns of the wrist, back, and neck, but lack information from a holistic perspective (DiFrancisco et al., 2019; Emara et al., 2020; Viana, 2018; Zwibel et al., 2019).

PROBLEM

There is currently limited research on the occupational needs of esports players.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to determine the occupational needs and barriers faced by esports players as they participate in daily life, and advocate for occupational therapy's potential role.

METHODS

- Qualitative Study
- Survey and Interview
- Participants: 9 survey, 6 interview
- Interviews were analyzed using Braun and Clarke thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

RESULTS

THEMES

QUOTES

"I Don't Need that Judgment"

"...I have a feeling most people would just say play less and not really help so, I don't really need that judgment, so I won't go."

"...a lot of what I see in sort of the news for video games it sometimes has a bit of a negative lean on it..."

"It's such a weird place to be in where you want to play and you cannot just because you are in pain from something. I want it to be better I just don't know how it would help or what would help it."

Recognition of Health Impacts & Desire for Change

"It's definitely, ... a major concern for me to be able to continue playing my games and continue my work and rock climbing, like I feel like those are 3 pretty important aspects of my life, so I do have pretty serious concerns about, ...getting to a point where I'm not able to do that anymore, so there's a big focus to handle that now."

Social Benefits

"I have met some of my best friends through online gaming/competitions. I also use video games to keep in social contact with my friends."

"As for what you can do in winter is pretty limited, so gaming with friends is like, ...a big part of my social interaction with my friends and peers."

Purposeful Inclusion with Scheduling and Routines

"I play video games to unwind at the end of my work days, and to relax during the weekends."

"I get a lot of stimulation out of my work and things like that so video games are pretty important part of like my destressing routine."

ERGONOMICS

Experience with an ergonomics specialist contributed to the understanding of basic ergonomics principles, proper measurement and assessment of stations, influenced needs assessment, and provided basis for understanding of participant experiences in relation to set up description, pain experienced and rationale, and occupational therapy role.

DISCUSSION

- Participants interviewed expressed themes of stigma surrounding seeking medical intervention, as well as negative perceptions of how esports are viewed.
- 8 of 9 participants reported experiencing pain, while 0 participants sought medical care for pain related to or affecting esports participation.
- Esports participation allows for access to social interactions and provides motivation, meaning, and contributes to identity.
- Balancing esports within schedules and routines to optimize participation and promote health.

IMPLICATIONS

Potential occupational therapy role to address stigma, advocate for players, educate on prevention, and promote healthy routines.

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References