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Tyler Brinkman

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

Steven M. Gerardi

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

Kaitlyn Jones

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Database of Video Games and Their Therapeutic Properties

Tyler Brinkman, Steven M. Gerardi, PhD, OTD, MSS, OTR, Kaitlyn Jones, OTD, OTR

BACKGROUND

Commercial video games have potential as a therapeutic medium in occupational therapy (OT) practice (Ahmadpour et al., 2019; Gustavsson et al., 2021; Li et al., 2016; Shute et al., 2015). However, video game development vastly out paces research on its efficacy (Colder Carras et al., 2018; Pallavicini et al., 2021). The available studies focused on outdated commercial video games making it difficult for OT practitioners to know the therapeutic properties and potential of various current commercial video games.

PROBLEM

OT practitioners are unaware of the potential therapeutic properties of video games they have not played, so are unable to integrate unfamiliar video games as therapeutic media in clinical practice.

PURPOSE

To develop an online database of commercial video games, and their therapeutic properties, to facilitate their use as therapeutic media in OT practice.

DEVELOPMENT

Development of the database took place across five phases:

Selection Phase:

10 video games were selected from two commercial video game subscription services, PlayStation Plus Premium and Xbox Game Pass, or from games available for purchase for the Nintendo Switch.

Analysis Phase:

The 10 video games were played for a minimum of two hours each and subject to a modified activity analysis. This modified activity analysis is based on the Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (Fisher & Jones, 2010).

Design Phase:

A webpage was created in collaboration with the Family Gaming Database. This webpage contains links to three subpages featuring a category of the performance skills within the activity analysis.

Input Phase:

The 10 games were divided into the three subpages based on the performance skills the game was found to predominately influence.

Polishing Phase:

Key stakeholders and clinicians were asked to provide feedback on the usefulness and ease of use of the database.

DATABASE

Database Webpage

Link: <https://www.taminggaming.com/en-us/lists/group/Therapeutic>

How to Use the Database:

1. Match the main focus of your client session by choosing from the three main prompts (Motor, Process, Social) and click on the associated list link.
2. Review the focus area subtype options available on the page (for example, when navigating to the Motor page, game options are categorized by balance, gross motor, etc.)
3. [Optional] Apply filters to further narrow the scope of listed games based on your defined criteria. Click the filters button located in the top right of the page if it did not automatically open. Filter options include length of play time, platform, age rating etc. Accessibility filter options include the number of buttons or sticks used, difficulty settings, a variety of visual settings etc.
4. Click on the title of any game you would like to view more details on. This page is not accessibility specific. Accessibility related data can be found by clicking on the Accessibility Box found at the top of a specific game's page. To view the activity analysis data for a given game, view the Video Game Activity Analyses doc by clicking on the "Video Game Analysis" link found both on the initial landing page and within each subpage.

Future Plans:

- Integrate client factors and performance skills (Global Mental Functions Sensory Functions, Bends, Calibrates, Initiates etc.) as applicable filters for the games
- Include embedded videos to show in game menu navigation and to provide further explanation

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References



Database

