

'Analysing perceptions of online games-based learning: case study of the University of Northampton'

Alison Power

Associate Professor (Learning and Teaching)
Faculty Lead for Interprofessional Education

ICQHE 2022:XVI

International Conference on Quality in Higher Education
28th July 2022, London



Abstract

Games-based learning aims to enhance students' engagement with and enjoyment of learning opportunities using games-related principles to create a fun yet productive learning environment. Motivating students to learn in an online setting can be particularly challenging, so a cross-Faculty synchronous online session provided students with the opportunity to engage with 'GAMING': an interactive, flexible and scalable e-resource for students to work synchronously in groups to complete a series of e-tivities designed to enhance their skills of leadership, collaboration and negotiation. Findings from a post-session online survey found the majority of students had a positive learning experience, finding 'GAMING' to be an innovative and engaging e-resource which motivated their group to learn.

Keywords—collaboration; games-based learning; groupwork; synchronous online learning; teamwork

Programmes

BSc (Hons) Midwifery

BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth

BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (Top up and Standard routes)

BA (Hons) Social Work

BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing

BSc (Hons) Child Nursing/Children and Young Peoples Nursing

BSc (Hons) Learning Disability Nursing

BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing

BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy

BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science

BSc (Hons) Podiatry

FdSc Early Childhood Studies

FdSc Dental Nursing

FdSc Health and Social Care

FdSc Paramedic Science

FdA Learning and Teaching

FdSc Nursing Associate

MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration)



The challenge...

How to motivate students to engage with synchronous online groupwork...



before



after



A possible solution?



What is 'gamification' or 'games-based learning'?

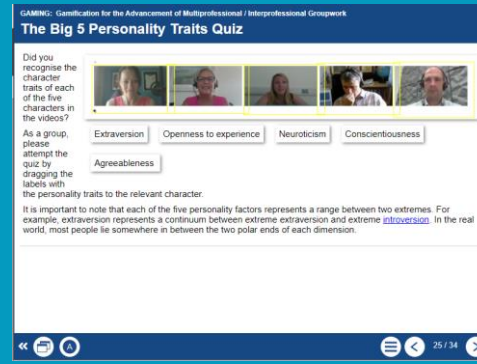
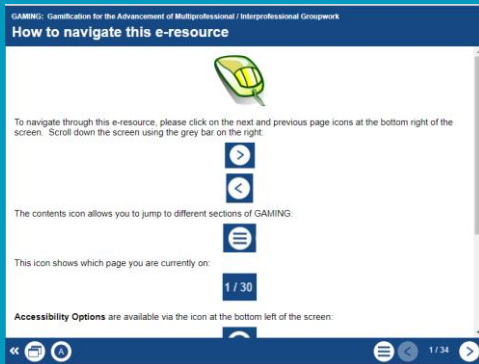
'To gamify an activity is to structure it so that it is more like a game, which might increase motivation and make the activity more pleasant or enjoyable' (Forrest *et al.*, 2020:168)

'Gamification is the idea to use elements of game design in non-game contexts, products and services to motivate desired behaviours' (Deterding 2012:14)



What is 'GAMING'?

a games-based, interactive e-resource using xerte software to promote student engagement and motivation to learn with, from and about students on other health and social care programmes



Scan for Introductory Video

Survey: methods

- JISC Online Surveys
- 329 students were invited by email to participate
- 23 students responded = 7% response rate



Survey: participants

Programme

BSc (Hons) Midwifery	6
BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing	4
BSc (Hons) Child Nursing	3
BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing	1
BSc (Hons) Learning Disability Nursing	1
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	3
BA (Hons) Social Work	2
MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration)	3
Total	23

Ethnic Group

1. English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	15
2. Irish	1
4. Any other White background (please describe below)	1
5. White and Black Caribbean	1
6. White and Black African	1
14. African	3
17. Arab	1

Age

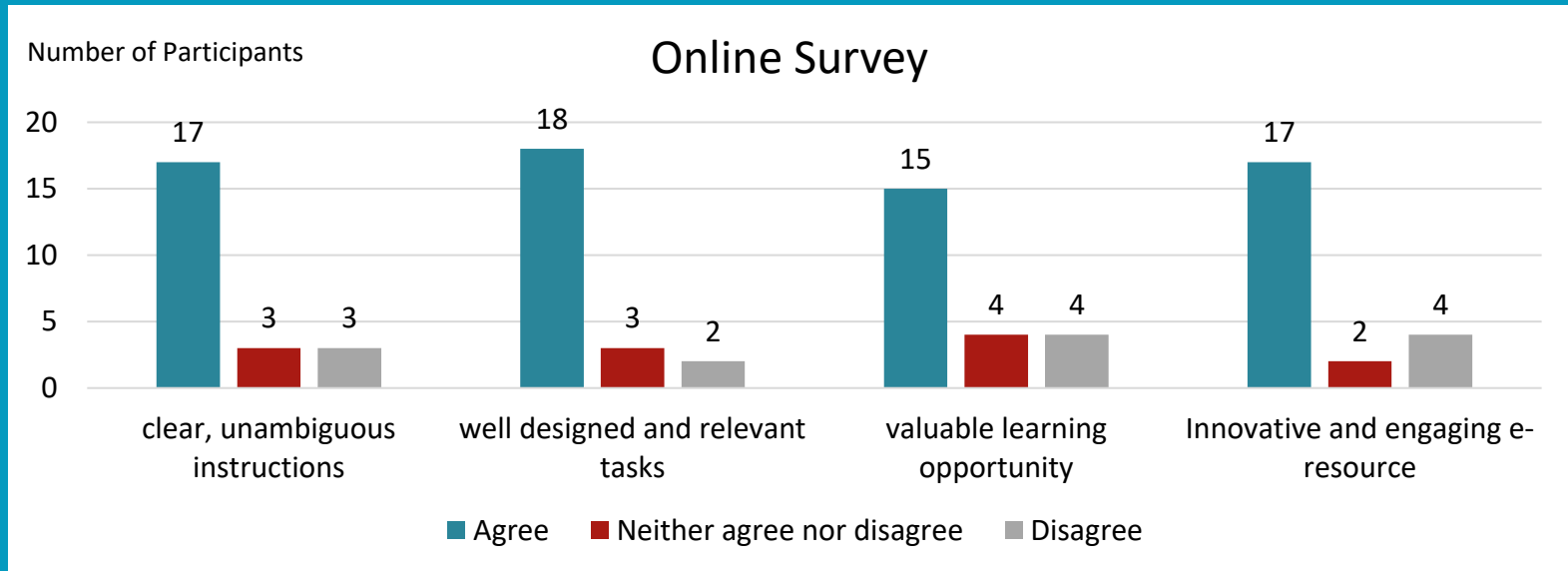
18-22	7
23-35	9
over 35	7

Gender

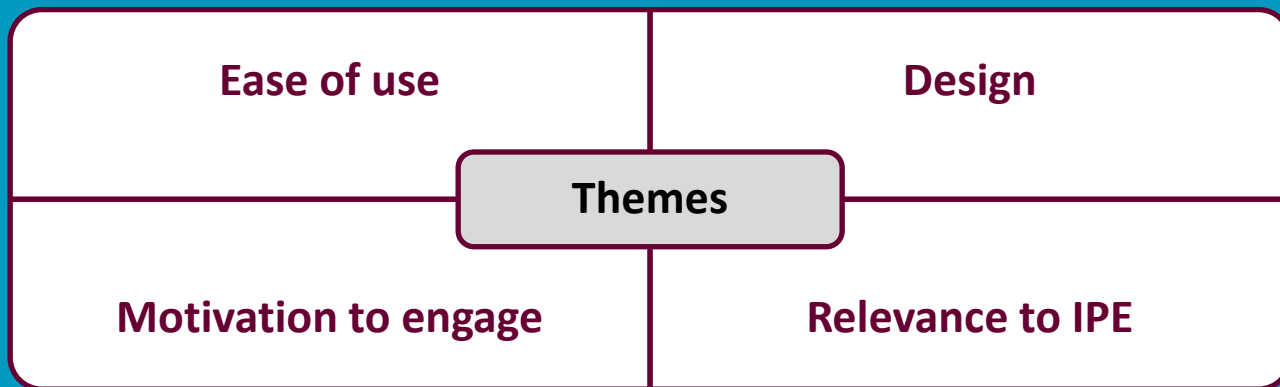
Male	4
Female	18



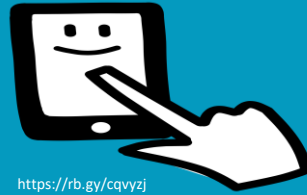
Results



Qualitative Themes



Theme 1: Ease of use



- ✓ In this digital world it is great to see how we can all connect efficiently from home
- ✓ The xerte was well laid out and simple to navigate
- ✓ I understood what we were expected to do clearly
- ✓ Once you followed the tasks it was self-explanatory
- ✓ Everything followed nicely and logically from one another
- ✓ I think people found it easy to engage with so they got something out of it

- X Was a little confusing but once on the resource it became clearer
- X Once you were on the resource it was fine, but getting to it was complicated
- X I had technical difficulties that I could not have known about prior to the session
- X Some people were not able to use their mics so couldn't fully engage in the discussion

Theme 2: Design



<https://rb.gy/dficky>

- ✓ Was relevant as the discussions we were able to have together helped us to collaborate as a team and share our views together
 - ✓ The task was designed to make us think about working together and the dynamics in a team which this did very well
 - ✓ I really enjoyed the videos – I'm a visual learner so to see the characters acting as opposed to just reading about the different types of characters made it much more relatable and understandable to me
- X It would have been preferable to meet in person, however it is understandable due to COVID regs
- X I think more time in a face to face environment would have been beneficial to have made it easier to get to know more about each other as some of the group participants were not able to use their mics so probably felt left out (unintentionally)

Theme 3: Motivation to engage



<https://rb.gy/cahef6>

- ✓ Mixing with other students from different professions
 - ✓ It was beneficial to get us to work as a team and be able to voice and discuss all of our opinions
 - ✓ Good to chat with other healthcare students and learn about their unique roles
 - ✓ It was a fun exercise to take part in while learning
 - ✓ Being thrown into a group of strangers from different fields – totally out of my comfort zone but very beneficial/positive learning outcomes for me
 - ✓ This was actually very enjoyable – I actually learned a little bit about myself through the group activities
-
- X Too big groups – would be better face to face
 - X Make it practical, online feels disjointed
 - X I would like to see it more subject related – perhaps include case studies where every student can use their skills to solve an issue within the case study but still make it as fun as this exercise

Theme 4: Relevance to IPE



<https://rb.gy/rdb9dz>

- ✓ It is a multi professional world and we will always interact with MDT (multi disciplinary team) so this was very useful
- ✓ It was good to meet other healthcare students as we normally don't cross paths and we are likely to collaborate in the workplace
- ✓ Good to collaborate with other professions
- ✓ I had a discussion with occupational therapy and learned how we can work together to strengthen patients' outcomes
- ✓ I feel more positive about IPE now than I did before the session

Recommendations

- Games-based learning can be a useful tool to motivate students to engage with online learning as long as the resource is well-designed and user-friendly, and students have appropriate equipment
- IPE facilitators should aim to incorporate authentic examples/case studies from practice to enhance student satisfaction, understanding and application of new knowledge
- To meet the learning needs and preferences of all students, IPE should be offered in a variety of formats (synchronous/asynchronous online, face to face, workshops)



References

Deterding S (2012) Gamification: designing for motivation. *Interactions* **19** (4) 14

Forrest C, Moffat D, Shabalina O (2020) *Gamification in a High School Class Improved Motivation and Grades* European Conference on Games Based Learning. Reading

Power A (2021) **GAMING: Gamification for the Advancement of Multi-agency/INterprofessional Groupwork. Using gamification technology to enhance interprofessional collaboration, negotiation, conflict resolution and leadership skills.**
Unpublished

Thank you
Any questions?

Alison Power

Associate Professor (Learning and Teaching)
Faculty Lead for Interprofessional Education
Senior Lecturer in Midwifery

University of Northampton
Alison.power@northampton.ac.uk



@alisonpowerUK

@UniNhantsFHES

