Game On, Stress Off: Unveiling the Relaxation Potential of Video Games

Menchaca, Tania (School: Newton College and Career Academy)
Coots, Lynda (School: Newton College and Career Academy)
Ramos, Miguel (School: Newton College and Career Academy)

Cozy video games are a known method of stress relief. Cozy games primarily focus on the player assisting others through acts of nurturing and generosity. The core of cozy games are the player's ability to use it as an outlet for self-expression, letting the player progress through the game as a result of personal decisions. We believe if the participant plays the cozy game for at least 15 minutes, the participant's heart rate and stress levels will decrease. To test this theory, we conducted a study with human participants. They were given a pre-game play survey and had their heart rates (in bpm) measured and recorded. They played the cozy video game, "Unpacking", for 15 minutes, were given a post-game play survey, and had their heart rate measured again. Our data showed that there was about a 5% decrease in heart rate from before game play to after game play. Then, for stress levels, our data showed about a 33% decrease. After calculating the standard deviation and 2 standard errors, we noticed that the error bars of the before and after data overlapped. This means that there was not a significant difference between the before and after heart rates and stress levels. However, there was some difference, so we concluded that "cozy" video games can play some role in lowering stress.

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