Abstract

The study aimed to examine the social gameplay and learning experience of older adults during four weeks of gameplay using a customised educational digital Bingo game with nutrition and health content. The research design (n=50) used a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach to investigate the experience of this group of older players (60 years and above). This method split the study into two phases: the first phase consisted of four weeks of gameplay and quantitative data collection using pre- and post-tests, while the second phase consisted of post-gaming interviews of selected players to collect qualitative data.

The results showed significant improvement of players’ game attitude and social connectedness scores from the pre-test to the post-test. Further support of interview data also confirmed these increases. The interview data also shed light on the importance of social connectedness, co-playing, older players’ preferences, and knowledge gained from playing this game. These results were consistent with earlier research studies conducted.

New findings included the generation of a conceptual framework that explains the connections among the various themes discovered from the older adult players’ game-playing experiences. The framework also explains how a digital game that offers a relevant objective to what the older adults want (in this case, learning about nutrition and health in a good social co-playing setting) has the capability to provide them with a good social and learning experience. In addition, by providing this group of players with a positive game-playing experience, they were able to find themselves engaged in the gameplay, playing uninterruptedly, and contributing their experiences to digital game development.

**Keywords:** Digital games; older adults; mixed methods research; social capital; social connectedness; adult learners