

Dental student attitudes towards a serious game for promoting empathy for those with mental health conditions

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Introduction

Dental practitioners regularly treat patients with mental health conditions. Increased dental practitioner empathy is linked with improved patient attendance and treatment outcomes. Empathy can be increased with arts-based teaching interventions that demonstrate lived experience. "Serious games" are one such example. This study sought to validate the usability and acceptability of a serious game as a learning tool by dental students. The serious game demonstrates the experiences of people with depression, grief, and dental anxiety.

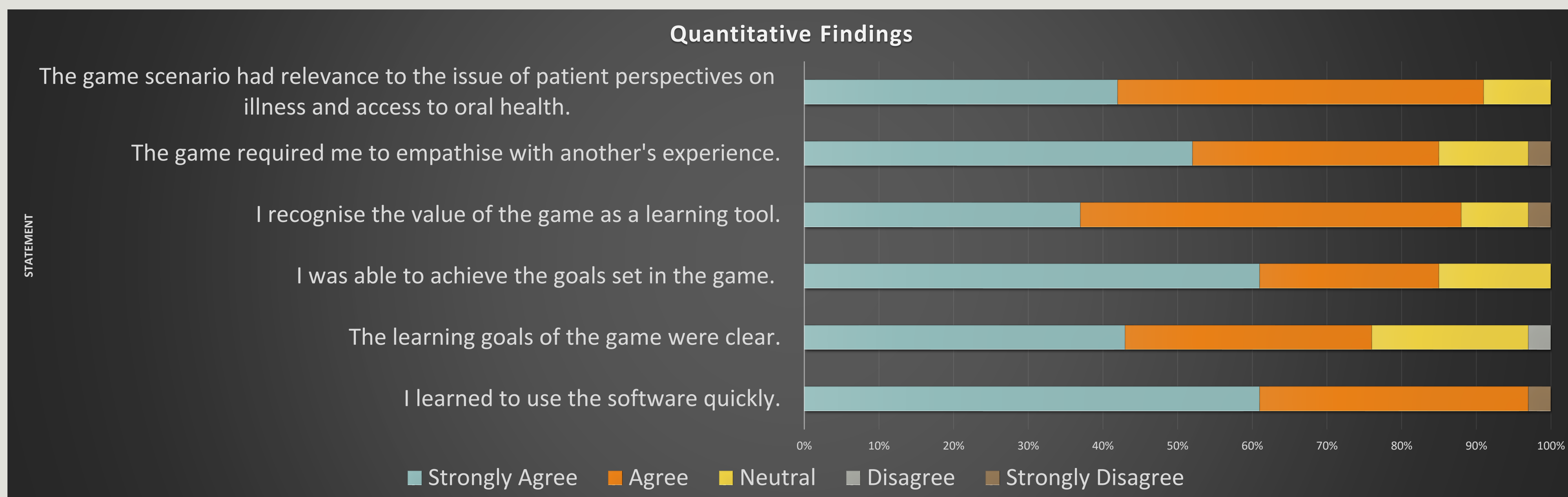
Method

A browser-based, hypertext serious game featuring three narratives was developed using the Twine markup tool. An adapted version of the questionnaire for the evaluation of serious games featuring 29 five-point Likert Scale statements and an open feedback section was delivered immediately post-intervention to a cohort of 49 dental students at a university in Scotland.

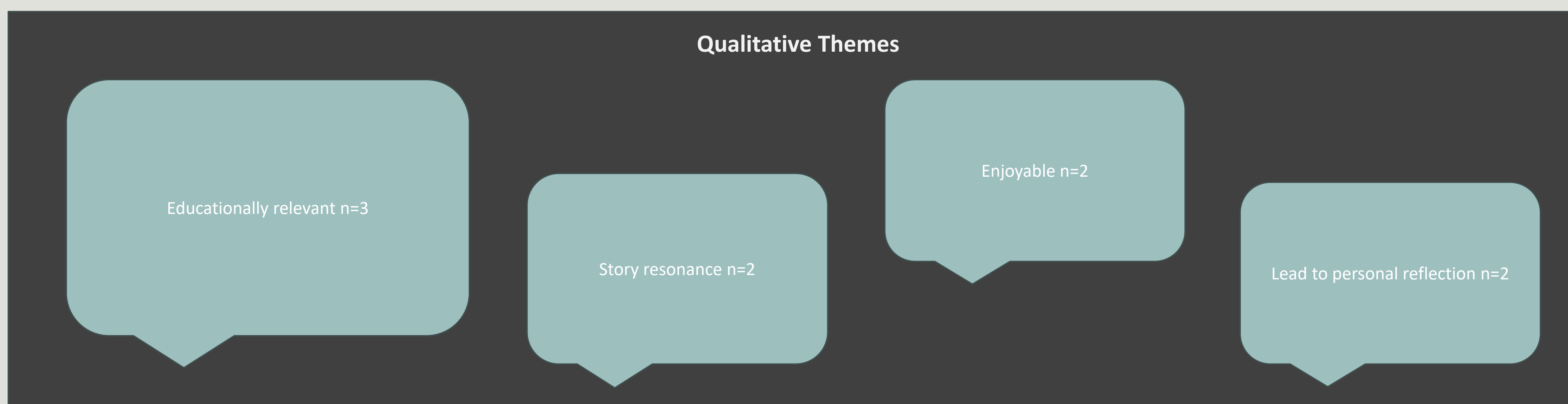
Results

33 questionnaires returned (67.3%), 10 participants left qualitative feedback (20.4%).

Quantitative Findings



Qualitative Themes



Conclusion

Dental students display positive attitudes towards this serious game and validate its useability and acceptability as a learning tool for describing lived experience of depression, grief, and dental anxiety. This study provides evidence that game-based learning tools may have a role in developing empathy in dental students.

Play the game!

Three Narratives for Dental Students is available to play in a web browser on PC, mobile, or tablet devices. Use this QR code to access. The password is *aberdeen* (no capital letters).

