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Can group counselling help medical students improve awareness of their gaming habits?

Submission date
05/02/2025

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
05/02/2025

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
17/04/2025

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[ ] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
The gaming industry has changed significantly due to the arrival of digital platforms with a shift to mobile games from desktop and console games. Mobile games have become increasingly addictive among university students. Medical students may be at a higher risk of becoming addicted to mobile games due to their demanding and stressful study environment.
Group motivational interviewing is a counselling process in a group format that is used to improve motivation for change, and develop advantageous relationships with practitioners and clients to promote behavioural change. Group motivational interviewing could be used to raise awareness of the potential risks of mobile game behaviours. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a group counselling approach called group motivational interviewing to increase awareness of the risks of mobile gaming addiction behaviours among medical students.

Who can participate?
Medical students

What does the study involve?
All participants will receive group motivational interviewing. A total of three group motivational interviewing sessions will be conducted, each lasting 1 hour, held over a period of 3 weeks on the university campus. Participants will be asked to complete pre-post and 2-month post-intervention questionnaires. The questionnaires will ask questions related to social media habits, motivation to reduce mobile game addiction, and social media usage.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
All students participating will receive the group motivational interviewing. Participants may decline to share their responses in the session if they feel uncomfortable. Information obtained from this study may benefit improved group motivational interviewing sessions in the future. The risk of harm is minimal.

Where is the study run from?
University Malaysia Sarawak (Malaysia)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
June 2023 to August 2024

Who is funding the study?
University Malaysia Sarawak (Malaysia)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Leonard Lei Yik Chuan, leonardleiyikchuan@gmail.com

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
FME/23/69

Study information

Scientific Title
Effectiveness of group motivational interviewing in raising awareness about the potential risks of mobile gaming behaviours leading to addiction among medical students: a pilot study

Study objectives
Hypothesis 1: Group motivational interviewing leads to progression in stages of change towards decreasing behaviours associated with mobile game addiction.
Hypothesis 2: Group motivational interviewing leads to an increase in motivation to improve internet addiction behaviours.
Hypothesis 3: There is a positive correlation between self-reported mobile game addiction levels and application-recorded mobile game usage among medical students.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 14/12/2023, Medical Research Ethics Commitee, University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) (Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia, Kuching, 94300, Malaysia; +60 (0)82581222 or +60 (0)82581223; medicalethics@unimas.my), ref: UNIMAS/TNC(PI)/09 - 65/01 Jld.2 (53)

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Single-center interventional open-label single-arm study

Study type(s)
Efficacy

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Mobile gaming addiction

Interventions
A single-arm study will be conducted to test group motivational interviewing effectiveness in raising awareness about the potential risks of mobile gaming behaviours that could lead to addiction. Purposive sampling will be used to recruit the medical students. The intervention will consist of three 1-hour sessions carried out over 3 weeks. Intervention content will be adapted from Wagner and Ingersoll's model of group motivational interviewing and will be conducted face-to-face by the first author who is trained in motivational interviewing. The content of sessions will be reviewed by a trained clinical psychologist with expertise in motivational interviewing to ensure intervention integrity. This study will use a pre-post with a follow-up 2 months post-intervention assessment.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
1. Effectiveness of GMI on the stages of change progression assessed through the Adapted Stages of Change (SoC) questionnaire at three timepoints (pre, post and 2 months post intervention)
2. Motivation to improve mobile game addiction assessed via the Internet Addiction Improvement Motivation Scale (IAIMS) at three timepoints (pre, post and 2 months post intervention)

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Self-reported mobile game addiction measured via the Internet Gaming Disorders Scale – Short Form (IGDS9-SF) at three timepoints (pre, post and 2 months post intervention)
2. Screen Time and Digital Wellbeing applications were used to objectively measure mobile game usage on smartphones and tablets, but were not used directly to record, store data or modify the applications. Instead, participants used these commercial applications to manually record their objective mobile game usage. The data reflects the total weekly mobile game usage, evaluated in minutes, at three timepoints (pre, post and 2 months post intervention)

Completion date
17/08/2024

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Medical students with smartphones or tablets

Participant type(s)
Learner/student

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Adult

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
34

Key exclusion criteria
1. Prior MI training
2. Learning disabilities
3. History of substance abuse for the past 6 months
4. Suicidal ideation
5. Recent psychotherapy on internet gaming disorder

Date of first enrolment
05/06/2024

Date of final enrolment
11/06/2024

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Malaysia

Study participating centre
University Malaysia Sarawak
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Kota Samarahan
Sarawak
Kuching

Malaysia
94300

Sponsor information

Organisation
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

ROR
https://ror.org/05b307002

Funder(s)

Funder type
University/education

Funder Name
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

Alternative Name(s)
University of Malaysia, Sarawak

Funding Body Type
Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Universities (academic only)

Location
Malaysia

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available to protect individual data privacy. The data may be made available from the corresponding author on reasonable request and with the permission of the medical school.

IPD sharing plan summary
Other, Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article		16/04/2025	17/04/2025	Yes	No