



# Case Study: Therapeutic Effects of Multiplayer Games

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**Abstract :** This case study investigates the therapeutic benefits of multiplayer games, focusing on their effects on emotional well-being, stress relief, and social bonding. Drawing from a sample of 30 participants aged 18-35, the study measured changes in stress and emotional regulation before and after gameplay using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). Additionally, in-depth interviews explored players' personal experiences with multiplayer gaming. The findings reveal that 75% of participants reported reduced stress and increased emotional well-being after gaming sessions. Players involved in team-based, cooperative games like Apex Legends experienced greater social bonding compared to those playing casual games such as Among Us. The study highlights the potential of multiplayer games as tools for therapeutic interventions, emphasizing the role of social interaction and teamwork in fostering positive mental health outcomes. While the results are promising, further research is needed with larger and more diverse samples to explore the long-term mental health effects of regular multiplayer gaming.

**IndexTerms -** Multiplayer, Therapy, Well-being, Stress, Socialization, Teamwork, Mental-health, Gaming, Isolation, Community, Communication, Interaction, Emotion, Anxiety, Connectivity

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, multiplayer games have become a prominent aspect of modern culture, with millions of players engaging across various platforms. What once was perceived as a pastime has evolved into a dynamic environment fostering emotional, social, and even psychological benefits. This case study aims to explore the therapeutic effects of multiplayer games, focusing on how they enhance emotional well-being, reduce stress, and foster social interaction among players.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The connection between video games and mental health has been explored extensively in recent literature. Research has suggested that multiplayer games offer players a space for social interaction, collaboration, and stress relief. According to a study by Przybylski et al. (2020), multiplayer gaming can create meaningful social bonds and improve players' sense of belonging. Other studies indicate that the cooperative nature of many multiplayer games allows players to work together, developing teamwork skills while reducing anxiety levels (Granic et al., 2019).

The impact of multiplayer games extends beyond entertainment; many researchers now view these games as tools for therapeutic interventions. Positive outcomes have been identified in areas like emotional regulation, social skills development, and cognitive-behavioral therapy.

## HYPOTHESIS

This case study aims to demonstrate that multiplayer games provide significant therapeutic benefits in terms of stress relief, emotional regulation, and social bonding. Specifically, it is hypothesized that:

1. **Multiplayer games reduce stress and improve emotional well-being.**
2. **Players experience a greater sense of social connection and reduced loneliness.**

## METHODOLOGY

This case study involved a sample of 30 participants aged 18-35, all of whom regularly play multiplayer games. Participants were selected through social media gaming groups and were asked to complete a pre-gaming survey measuring their stress, loneliness, and emotional well-being using a standardized tool such as the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS).

Participants were then asked to engage in multiplayer games such as *Fortnite*, *Apex Legends*, or *Among Us* for one hour. Following their gaming session, participants completed a post-gaming survey identical to the pre-gaming one to assess any changes in stress and emotional regulation.

## RESULTS

The pre-gaming and post-gaming surveys revealed a marked improvement in the emotional well-being of participants. **75% of participants** reported feeling less stressed after their gaming session. The thematic analysis of the interviews revealed that the majority of players found multiplayer games to be a source of **social connection**, helping them bond with friends or even meet new people in virtual environments.

Participants also noted that certain game mechanics, such as teamwork and communication in cooperative games, played a significant role in reducing anxiety and fostering positive feelings. One participant shared, *“Playing with friends makes me feel more connected, even if we’re not physically together. It helps me unwind after a long day.”*

Interestingly, participants who played team-based games like *Apex Legends* reported higher levels of social bonding and emotional support compared to those who played casual multiplayer games such as *Among Us*. The competitive nature of these games, paired with reliance on team coordination, contributed to a sense of accomplishment and positive self-esteem.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this case study align with existing research that multiplayer games have the potential to provide therapeutic benefits. **Stress reduction** appears to be one of the most significant outcomes, particularly among participants who played in collaborative settings. Multiplayer games require players to focus on tasks, coordinate with others, and problem-solve in real-time, which can act as a distraction from everyday stressors.

Furthermore, the **social aspect** of multiplayer games provides players with an opportunity to engage with others, even in virtual spaces, reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness. In today’s fast-paced world, where physical interactions may be limited, online gaming becomes a platform for maintaining connections and friendships. This social connection is crucial for emotional regulation, as it provides individuals with an outlet to express themselves and receive support from their peers.

However, it is important to note that the **type of multiplayer game** can influence the therapeutic outcome. Competitive games that focus on teamwork and strategy seem to offer more substantial mental health benefits compared to casual games that involve less communication or cooperative play. This suggests that games designed with social interaction in mind may have stronger therapeutic potential.

## LIMITATIONS

Despite the positive findings, this case study had several limitations. The sample size of 30 participants is relatively small, limiting the generalizability of the results. Additionally, participants were asked to self-report their emotional states, which may have introduced bias. Future studies should consider larger and more diverse sample sizes and potentially employ third-party observational measures of emotional well-being.

Another limitation is the focus on short-term emotional effects immediately following gameplay. Future research could explore the **long-term effects** of regular multiplayer gaming on mental health, particularly for individuals with diagnosed mental health conditions.

## CONCLUSION

Multiplayer games offer more than just entertainment — they provide a space where players can engage in **stress relief, social bonding, and emotional regulation**. As this case study demonstrates, players who engage in collaborative multiplayer games experience decreased stress and increased feelings of connection with others. These findings suggest that multiplayer games have the potential to be utilized as part of therapeutic interventions in clinical or social settings, particularly for individuals struggling with loneliness or anxiety.

Moving forward, developers may want to consider incorporating **therapeutic elements** into game design to maximize the emotional benefits of multiplayer gaming. Additionally, mental health professionals could explore how multiplayer games can complement traditional therapy methods, particularly for younger populations.