EMBARKING ON
MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

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TOPIC

In the fullness of time, men have been strapped with an immense burden of expectations and challenges encountered on a day-to-day basis, a subsequent consequence of the assigned societal gender positions.

Now more than ever, the wellbeing of these men is detrimentally influenced, with countless men led to the undertaking of radical actions and explicitly putting an end to their own lives.

Without underemphasising the struggle of women, concern lies with men employing the usage of lethal means to guarantee their demise. [1]

MOTIVATION

In accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health conditions have increased by 13% in the last decade. [2]

Homogeneously, male suicide rates have persistently snowballed, with suicide disclosed as amongst the prima causes of fatality, between the ages of 20-49. [4,5]

Suicide rate per 100,000 in England 2007–2021
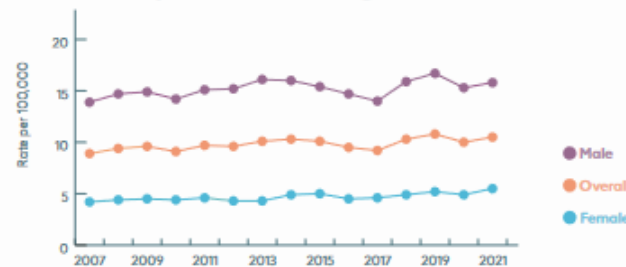
CONTEXT

Out of about 5200 suicides recorded in 2021 in the UK, about three quarters were committed by men. [6] Dreadfully four in ten men withhold from discussing about their wellbeing and tend to not pursue the necessitated support, despite a great amount admitting to having suffered from symptoms of depression or other mental health problems at some point in their lives. [7,9]

The reason is that men often encounter barriers that preventing them from accessing psychological health services, predominantly stigma surrounding perception of their traditional masculine values by friends, family, and so on. [1,8]

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SUMMARY OF PROJECT

AIM

The research study aims at conducting an in-depth investigation of the underexplored space surrounding men's mental health, and based on findings iteratively design a game-based solution that endeavours to improve the mental wellbeing of men.

METHODOLOGIES

✚ Human-centered approach *(reflect on the necessities, complications and preferences of genuine consumers)* [15]

✚ *Preference modelling approach* (habituating the artefacts to the wellbeing demands of chiefly men) [16]

Review literature
✚ Men's mental health / SotA / Strategies
✚ Evaluation techniques

Concept development
✚ Personas, Storyboarding
✚ Ideation/Sketching/Design

Prototyping
✚ High-fidelity app prototype – Adobe Xd
✚ Working game prototype – Unity

Prototypes evaluation
✚ Provocative Facebook post
✚ User evaluation – Geneva Emotion Wheel, Warwick-Edinburgh Mental wellbeing scale, Narrative analysis
✚ Expert stakeholder evaluation – PERMA model, Think-aloud technique

OVERVIEW

Broad findings implied that men disclose **preference and interest in strategies that incorporate an activity**, or rather aim at enhancing mental health through **incidental benefits**. [10]

Strategies signified the prominence of social appropriateness, to which people were evident to **benefit from coming together,** cultivating in the process a sense of belonging that sparked the drive for existence. [11]

Games were positively associated with positive effects to wellbeing, by fulfilling basic psychological demands and helping cope with life. [12,13]

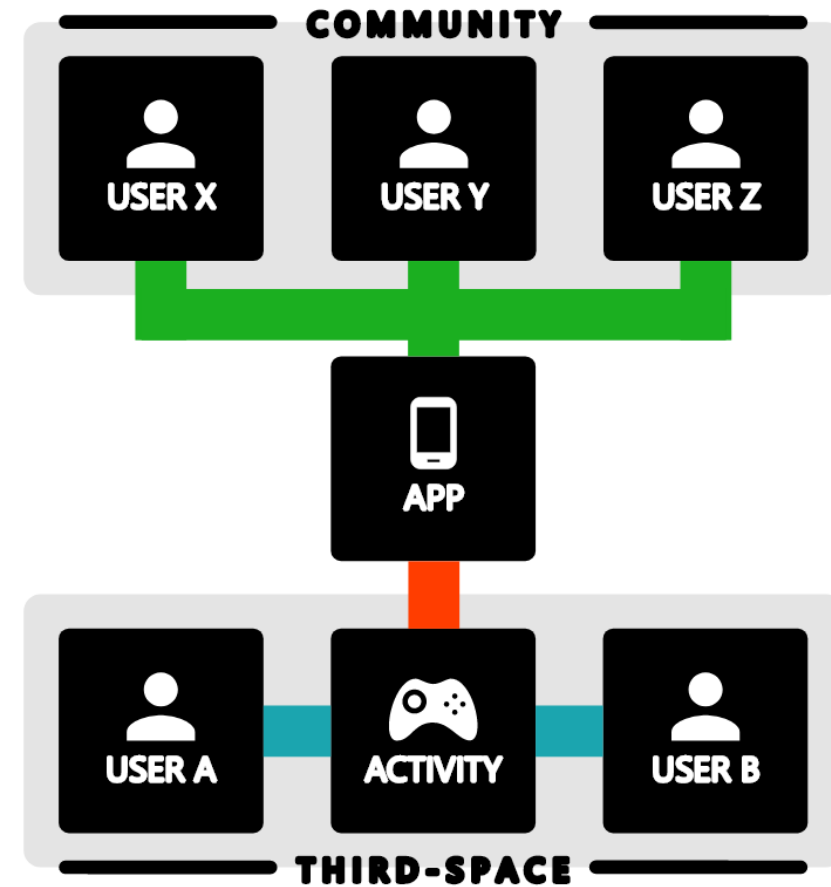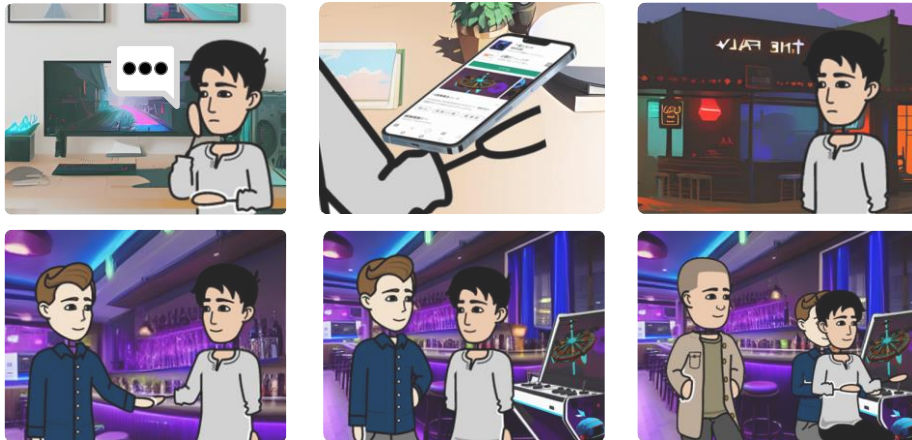## NON-TECHNOLOGICAL

✚ Participatory theatre
✚ Pinball
✚ Escape room

TECHNOLOGICAL

✚ Social VR
✚ Video game streaming
✚ Chatbots
✚ Mental health apps/prototypes
✚ Wearables

Preliminary investigation of case studies in the space uncovered that there is an evident **absence of** solutions in the field, explicitly **evidenced-based psychological interventions** intended at predominantly improving the quality of life of men.

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CONCEPT

In accordance with research conclusions, one discreet and predominantly male appealing tactic would be through a game-based intervention that can facilitate a gaming third space for men to socially connect and interact. Such an intervention would provide men with multitude of therapeutical opportunities for regulation and support of their mental wellbeing, that can manifest from the game, interactions associated with the game, newfound associations, or even merely the environment. [12]

COMMUNITY

USER X

USER Y

USER Z

APP

USER A

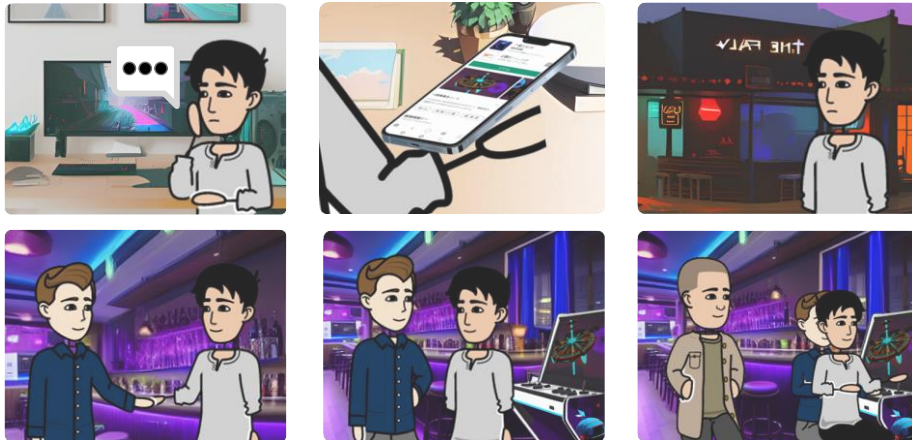ACTIVITY

USER B

THIRD-SPACE

CONCEPT

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Sticky notes:
- Playing a role
- Structured social play (e.g., drop-in bars, comp tournaments)
- Theme and story enable safe venting
- Nostalgia "love of the game"
- Social co-op modes
- Mild competitiveness

GAME FEATURES

+ Dual-player coop
+ Local multiplayer
+ Score game
+ Survive endless mob waves
+ Different types of mobs
+ Player roles/abilities
+ Players fall marks game end

GAME BRANDING

+ Event Horizon (*The surface of a black hole*)

+ Dyson sphere (*An artificial habitat harnessing the power output of a singular star*) [14]

= Dyson: Beyond the horizon (*story about an intergalactic battle for control over the Dyson sphere*)

SOCIAL FEATURES

✚ Community posts/events/clans
✚ Contacts
✚ Casual/Ranked matchmaking
✚ Solo/Duo/Clan Leaderboards
✚ Venue search
✚ Social content (e.g., streaming)
✚ Gift system

OBJECTIVE FEATURES

✚ Lifetime/seasonal challenges
✚ Battle pass (+premium version)
✚ LTEs (e.g., minigame)
✚ Shop (**NO** microtransactions)

OTHER FEATURES

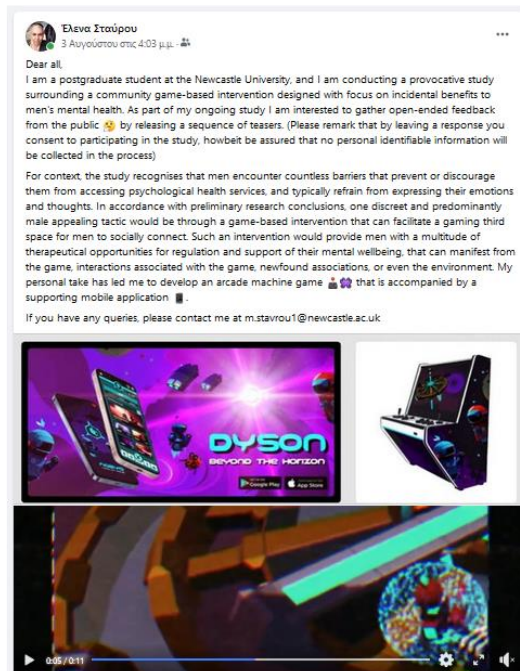✚ Character customization
✚ Energy system (QR code scan)
✚ Location optimization (postcode)
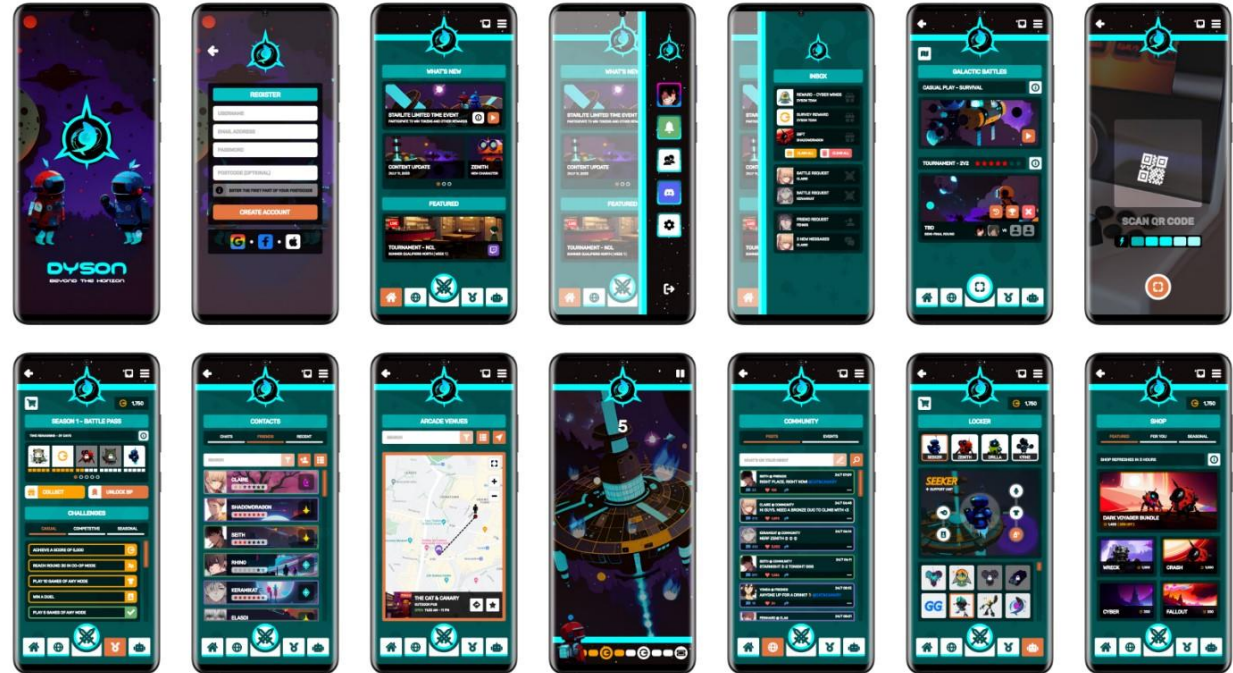
SOCIAL MEDIA POST

A provocative Facebook post in the interest of gathering open-ended feedback from the public.

EXPERT STAKEHOLDER EVALUATION

An assessment was conducted that predominantly employed Dr Seligman's PERMA theory, encompassing indicators of positive wellbeing that encourage a state of flourishing. [13]

➕ Positive emotions
➕ Engagement
➕ Positive relationships
➕ Meaning
➕ Achievements

A psychiatrist was deemed qualified to be employed as psychiatrists are medical practitioners that specialize in the identification and treatment of mental disorders.

USER EVALUATION

An assessment was conducted with the principal aim of comprehending the experiences and emotions of participants throughout.

➕ The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental wellbeing scale
➕ Geneva Emotion Wheel
➕ Narrative interviews

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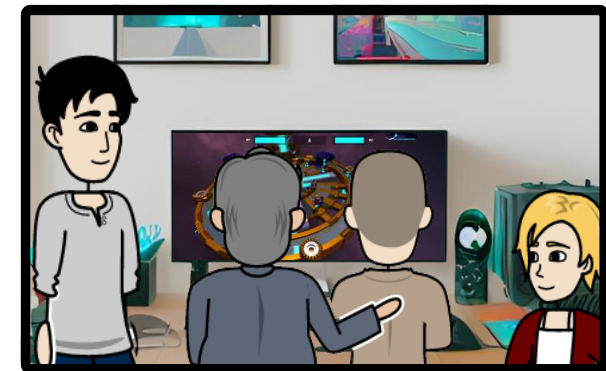
EVALUATION FINDINGS

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

"An enjoyable and engaging experience [...] effective balan[...] [...] [...] [...]bective abilities [...] adequately. In a similar manner, the application offers such eng[...] [...] [...] [...] by rewarding the player upon completion of challenges, and contributing towards the reach of a greater objective, for example advancing through the battle pass tiers and conquering the rankings."

[...]gest advantage of these games is that precisely because of [...] [...] relieve you of stress while having fun at the same time. [...] for [...] invitation to escape from the boring routine of everyday l[...] the other users. Whether as an A player or a B play[...] it was equally interesting to me."

I see a cl[...] [...] a problem to socialise or express their feelings and this more an[...] [...] [...] [...] This arcade machine can be indeed a solution for these easily ca[...] [...] people. [...] [...] [...] luck!!!

Μου αρέσει!   Απάντηση   Δείτε τη μετάφραση   3 εβδ.   Τροποποιήθηκε

Any game that promotes teamwork as a prerequisite for performance [...] self development mentality within oneself. Controlling emotions and con[...] effectively can lead to a sense of team bonding and pleasant emotions w[...] community. If a game can design certain tasks or goals that bind an end [...] [...] reinforcement. Encouraging eachother and complimenting individual plays or maintaining a one for all and all for one attitude when mistakes happen [...] and discovering one self, rpgs(role playing games) that have been created open ended, goving the ability tp change the outcome of the storyline depending on your choices very well inspire people. Such games like infamous, red dead [...] p change the outcome of the storyline depending on your choices could very well inspire people. Such games like infamous, red dead [...] group of player base.

Μου αρέσει!   Απάντηση   2 εβδ.   Τροποποιήθηκε   👍 2

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CONTRIBUTION TO HCI

Project contributes through an informed and innovative system solution that **encompasses a high-fidelity app prototype and an arcade game prototype.** These artefacts permit the envisioning of unprecedented opportunities and foreseeable outcomes.

User experiments conducted on the artefacts have additionally led to first-hand discoveries. Assessment with genuine participants granted an opportunity to **grasp insights concerning the probable wellbeing effects of the artefacts**, insights that were not exhaustively enclosed by existing research.

OUTCOME

The intended anticipated outcome to blossom included principally an optimal design solution that endeavours to improve the mental wellbeing of men.

Assessment conclusions of the **probable wellbeing effects were overwhelmingly positive**, indicating sufficient evidence that the solution is striving towards the correct direction.

Yet, the **dimensions of the proposed concept were exceedingly beyond reach within the time frame available at hand.** A short-term assessment exceedingly limits the insights reachable, as the concept unfolds over the long run.

LIMITATIONS

✚ A low-fidelity simulation of an arcade machine, including a half-finished game, **cannot amount to the experience of the real thing.**

✚ Assessment of the artefacts was performed over a **shorter period, limiting insights gathered.** Recommended assessment would necessitate multiple sessions over a longer period.

FUTURE WORK

✚ Polish the prototypes
✚ Proceed with development
✚ Build an arcade machine

Q&A

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