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1 **Should aspiring esports psychologists train in esports? Reflections of trainee sport and**

2 **exercise psychologists**

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9

10 **Abstract**

11 There is growing demand for psychology support at esport's highest level of competition. Not

12 only does research suggest that professional esports players are at risk of poor physical and

13 psychological health, but tournament organisers have begun to require teams to provide their

14 player's psychological support. Currently however, psychology practitioners working in esports'

15 top teams have trained in traditional sports before bringing their skills to esports: this is the

16 training route advised by organisational staff of the elite teams they work for. In this article, we

17 reflect on our own experiences as trainee sport and exercise psychologists developing in

18 esports to evaluate whether psychology practitioners aspiring to work at esports' highest level

19 should follow this advice and train in traditional sports, or develop in esports regardless. In our

20 reflexive thematic analysis of our autoethnographic narratives we identified themes of

21 opportunity, alienation, and financial and scheduling barriers to working in esports. While we are

22 more pessimistic than established practitioners, we believe our experiences are at least

23 somewhat typical of sport psychologist trainees, inside or outside of esports. While training

24 within esports is not without its limitations, we encourage trainees with passion and purpose for

25 working in esports to gain applied experience in esports. We finish by providing grounded

26 recommendations on what has helped us develop as practitioners so far.

27   **Should aspiring esports psychologists train in esports? Reflections of trainee sport and**

28   **exercise psychologists**

29   Esports (electronic sports) are video games that have a competitive infrastructure that

30   allows professional play (Bányai et al., 2019). Esports have exploded in popularity since the turn

31   of the millenia, especially in the last decade (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2020). Now, after

32   experiencing unprecedented numbers in the pandemic, the industry has stabilised, and despite

33   others questioning the business model of some esports organisations (Carreras et al., 2024),

34   esports are predicted to continue growing over the next decade (Dixon, 2023; Sirotin, 2024).

35   There is growing demand for sports psychology support at esports' highest level. Within

36   Europe's highest professional League of Legends league, performance coaches are now a

37   regulated position with team's coaching structure with a minimum pay level (Riot Games,

38   2024b), and the league requires their teams to offer qualified mental health services that can be

39   accessed anonymously by players (Riot Games, 2024a, 2024b). These announcements come

40   as growing research shows esports players facing high-performance demands and stressors

41   (Leis et al., 2023; Smith et al., 2019; Poulus et al., 2022), how these stressors can worsen

42   performances (Sharpe et al., 2024), how players are more at risk of mental health issues (e.g.,

43   Birch et al., 2024; Leis et al., 2023; Smith et al., 2022; Trotter et al., 2020; Trotter et al., 2023),

44   and increasingly call for wellbeing support (Gaasedal et al., 2024).

45   We believe education and development of qualified, theoretically informed practitioners

46   is needed to fill this gap. As it stands, there is minimal ethical and professional regulation

47   around performance psychology practitioners working within esports, and no standard level of

48   practice or knowledge as ethical competency thresholds. It is not uncommon for performance

49   coaches who use psychology to have no applied psychology training qualifications, or even in

50   some cases no postgraduate clinical, sport, or performance psychology qualifications (see

51   Esports Performance Hub, n.d.). Even at elite levels, practitioners that do have applied sport

52   psychology training do not have the depth of theoretical understanding that is often seen in

53   practitioners of elite-level traditional sports (Horne & Swettenham, 2024). As trainee sport and

54   exercise psychologists within esports, this world we are entering can be chaotic, terrifying and

55   hostile where we have met players and coaches who are sceptical of sport and performance

56   psychologists; and understandably so, if they have had bad experiences with ill-informed,

57   malpracticing performance coaches without proper ethical, theoretical, or practical training.

58   More, better trained practitioners are undoubtedly needed for appropriate player care and

59   industry confidence in the role.

60   However, aspiring sport psychologists face conflicting industry messages on how best to

61   approach their development within the field. Existing esports performance practitioners at the

62   elite level in the area are hesitantly optimistic in their recommendations for trainees in the field.

63   However, they themselves trained in traditional sports first before transferring into esports

64   (Ramaker & Pedraza-Ramirez, 2023). Conversely, Romain Bigeard (2024), the manager of

65   G2's League of Legends team, arguably the most dominant western team, explicitly tells people

66   wishing to work within esports to first master skills outside of esports before transferring them

67   across. This does not inspire confidence in people wanting to train within the industry, but

68   ultimately this advice is coming from their own experiences, in an industry new enough that they

69   themselves could have not developed in it beforehand. As neophyte practitioners just starting

70   our careers, we are in a different position to Bigeard (2024) and Ramaker & Pedraza-Ramirez

71   (2023) - it is unclear how much their advice is still valid.

72   Outside of esports, there are plenty of journal articles which contain trainee practitioners'

73   reflections of their work within traditional sport (e.g., Collins et al., 2013; Holt & Strean, 2001).

74   These reflections give authenticity and transparency to psychologists' development in different

75   performance domains as they gain new experiences and develop their skills (Anderson et al.,

76   2004; Holt & Strean, 2001). Anecdotes and past experiences, such as trainee reflections and

77   case studies, can be used to help other trainees make more informed decisions in their own

78   work and development (Smith et al., 2019), and other reflective accounts may discuss and

79 evaluate ethical practice, improve competencies and encourage their own and other

80 practitioners' development (Wadsworth et al., 2024).

81   More broadly, practitioner reflections are crucial to encourage continual practitioner

82 learning, self-awareness, congruent practice, and a development of a professional identity

83 (Keegan, 2016; Lindsay et al., 2007; Quartiroli et al., 2024). Reflections such as in this article

84 can help generate and provide context-specific knowledge about a particular industry (Cropley

85 et al., 2007, 2010; Fletcher & Maher, 2013). Prior knowledge of industry contexts, such as

86 esports, may help practitioners prepare and/or relieve challenges and self-doubt associated with

87 working in new environments and contexts (Quartiroli et al., 2024).

88   In trainee sport and exercise psychologists' reflections in esports thus far have been

89 localised to specific cases or teams (Swettenham et al., 2024). Trainees have reflected on their

90 team-building interventions (Swettenham & Whitehead, 2022) in a multicultural team (Agrawal

91 et al., 2024), or reported on their experiences from several interventions within a team (Brain et

92 al., 2024). While these case studies' reflections can include some reflections of the wider

93 industry context, these reflections, if present, are never the primary focus. While general

94 reflections of psychology practitioner work exist within esports (Ramaker and Pedraza-Ramirez,

95 2023), these are from established sport psychologists working for top european esports

96 organisations.

97   We look to fill this gap in the literature by providing our experiences training and

98 developing within the esports industry. We aim to answer: "How do trainee sport and exercise

99 psychologists experience their development within esports?". In doing so, we look to provide

100 authenticity and transparency to our training experiences (Anderson et al., 2004; Holt & Strean,

101 2001), and help other trainee sport and exercise psychologists aspiring to work in esports make

102 informed decisions on their future career paths (Smith et al., 2019).

103

104

Method

We used retrospective autoethnography to collect data of our experiences working as a trainee sport and exercise psychologists within esports (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022). Autoethnography provides personal accounts and narratives of people's experiences (Sparkes, 2000). These accounts complement empirical research to reflect and elaborate on practical interventions within a context or industry, and encourage individual and social reflection (Holt & Strean, 2001). While these experiences will not necessarily be generalisable to the industry as a whole, our aim is to provide a window into our experiences and roles within it.

Autoethnography is a widely used method, but raises ethical questions regarding consent for others (Edwards, 2021). The method is self-reflective of one's own experiences, however, as human experiences are inherently relational, these experiences and reflections of them are not necessarily one's own (Bochner, 2017; Edwards, 2021). Therefore, researchers are split between issues in authentically and accurately describing their own experiences, and issues of relational ethics in integrity and respect to others through the anonymity that may sacrifice (Edwards, 2021). As this retrospective autoethnography uses the past reflections we record as part of our training (see below), this presents another layer of ethical challenges: it is often not possible to achieve or apply for ethical approval for data that has already been collected (Edwards, 2021; e.g., Loughborough University, 2024). Current guidance is limited and vague, but suggests that where individuals in the text may be identifiable, informed consent should be sought before publication.

We have chosen to prioritise relational ethics within this autoethnography to overcome these issues of anonymity across several steps. First, each author assembled past reflections into a narrative, exploring their general experiences rather than specific client interactions or interventions. Second, these assembled narratives were combined with narratives from the other three authors, preventing any particular reflection being explicitly linked with any author. Third, no esport team or organisation affiliations of any author have been added to this paper.

131   Fourth, by using reflexive thematic analysis (as explained below), we do not present individual

132   narratives, which could be linked to authors, but instead present fragments of each of our

133   experiences presented as quotes. Finally, even where we received prior informed consent from

134   our clients, the final manuscript was shared with any potentially identifiable clients to ensure

135   they consented to its submission. If individuals were not uncomfortable with what we presented

136   or felt like they were identifiable, we either fictionalised the quote or removed the data from the

137   analysis until informed consent was freely given. Fictionalisation was chosen as a potential

138   alternative as it can maintain or even emphasise particular meaning in our experiences as

139   practitioners, while helping protect client anonymity (Eliastam et al., 2018). As a result, readers

140   of our experiences should not be able to identify whether the context is true or fictional, nor

141   which practitioner experienced it. What we have maintained throughout, however, is the

142   meaning of our experiences within esports across games and genres in line with our research

143   question.

144   **Author Information and Narrative Generation**

145   Each author has completed a postgraduate qualification in Sport Psychology and is

146   currently working towards being, or is already, a fully qualified, HCPC registered, Sport and

147   Exercise Psychologist. This is a post-graduate qualification in the UK which can be achieved by

148   different routes: either from the British Psychological Society (2023)'s Qualification in Sport and

149   Exercise Psychology (BPS QSEP), an HCPC-accredited professional doctorate in Sport and

150   Exercise Psychology, or the British Association of Sport and Exercise Science's (2024) Sport

151   and Exercise Psychology Accreditation Route (BASES SEPAR). The qualifications require a

152   minimum of 3200-3680 hours (400-460 days full-time) of practice, reflection, planning, and

153   professional development - and require supervised practice. This training can take between 2-6

154   years depending on full- or part-time enrolments, and requires candidates to record and present

155   their reflections as they train. These British qualifications contrast the Specialist in Applied Sport

156   Psychology certification by the European Federation of Sport Psychology (FEPSAC, n.d.) which

157   only requires 250 practice hours. As authors, we have experience in different esports and

158   traditional sports. Our experience in esports titles includes League of Legends, DOTA 2, Super

159   Smash Bros., Sim Racing, Counter-Strike 2, Overwatch, and Rocket League. Our experience in

160   traditional sports spans Football, Tennis, Volleyball, Wheelchair Basketball, Hockey, Rugby

161   League, Rowing, Mountain Biking, and Motorsports.

162   As part of our training pathways, each author has collected self-reflective data on their

163   practical work, experiences, and knowledge development. These can include memos, voice

164   notes/ recordings, or more formal writings. We have each used these reflections, as well as our

165   own memories, to assemble narrative accounts that discuss and evaluate our experiences

166   whilst training within esports (Cooper & Lilyea, 2022). Outside of the broad recommendations

167   from Cooper and Lilyea (2022), we did not over-impose structure or formatting to standardise

168   each of our accounts; instead choosing to provide each of us the freedom to present our stories

169   and the meaning of experiences as trainees as authentically as possible.

170   **Analysis and Reflexivity**

171   Then, I (the first author) conducted a reflexive thematic analysis of these narratives in

172   line with guidelines by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019, 2021). I familarised myself with others

173   narratives, and refamiliarised myself with my own, then generated initial codes. I collected those

174   codes into themes and subthemes which were then reflexively and iteratively reviewed by

175   myself and the fourth author, who has expertise in qualitative analysis. Quotes from each theme

176   can often be attributed to authors or interviewees and presented with their prevalence across all

177   sources. However, we have chosen not to do this to protect and maintain client anonymity:

178   where all or some authors experienced a particular theme, it would be easier to deduce and

179   identify clients.

180   Reflexive thematic analysis is an ontologically and epistemologically flexible method

181   (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2021) which, like autoethnography, fully embraces the subjectivity of the

182   researcher. Reflexive thematic analysis is thus in line with our philosophy of functional

183 contextualism and relational frame theory in our research and practice (see [BLINDED for

184 review]), especially in regards to its focus on individual experiences within a particular context

185 (Jando & Dionne, 2024). Outside of our philosophy and epistemology, the analysis was

186 inductive, using no preceding theory or similar previous reflections to guide it. Pragmatically,

187 reflexive thematic analysis was chosen over presenting each narrative individually (e.g., Collins

188 et al., 2013) to condense how we have made meaning of our experiences as trainees in esports

189 (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and to protect the anonymity of each authors' clients.

190   At the time of writing this paper and conducting the reflexive thematic analysis, I (the

191 first author) am still living with my parents and am currently working remotely at a loss to train as

192 a sport and exercise psychologist: my supervision and training fees are considerably more than

193 the payment I have received for my services as a trainee. While I am in arguably the best

194 physical and mental health of my life and have recently had some of my esports psychology

195 research accepted, I am currently unable to move out and maintain normal relationships with

196 other young people while training at this rate and level of income. This is an active decision I

197 have made to sacrifice my social life, to an extent, to pursue a career that is meaningful to me.

198   I (fourth author) am an HCPC sport and exercise psychologist accredited through the

199 BPS. I am also a lecturer at a UK university and an active researcher. I have worked in esports

200 for the last four years as an applied sport psychologist and researcher. Within this study, I acted

201 as a critical friend during the reflexive thematic analysis (Smith & McGannon, 2018). As I was

202 not immersed in the autoethnographic accounts like author one, I was able to encourage

203 reflection on certain themes in order to provide alternative viewpoints to the data.

204   Naturally, our experiences and perceptions as both a relatively new trainee and an

205 established practitioner and researcher will affect the codes and themes we identify. However,

206 using autoethnography as we do, we look to present and capture our human perceptions as a

207 time capsule for ourselves and the industry. In doing so, we allow ourselves to document and

208 revisit these experiences later in our and the industry's development.

Results

Our reflexive thematic analysis identified four main themes in our experiences

developing within esports: opportunities, alienation, esports time, and financial barriers (see

Table 1).

Table 1

Identified Themes and Subthemes in the Reflexive Thematic Analysis

Theme	Subtheme	Description
Opportunities	Accessibility	The online environment of esports makes teams, players, and staff more accessible than traditional sport.
	A novel context for Sport and exercise psychology development	New performance domain, outside of what is traditionally taught, which allows for us to use both the sport and exercise sides of our sport and exercise psychology training.
	Pioneers in the industry	Lack of established regulation and other psychologists within esports brings both freedom and responsibility
Alienation	Online communication barriers	Navigating online communication rules can be difficult. Limited face-to-face contact can slow development of practitioner-client relationships.
	Hegemonic masculinity within esports	Female-presenting practitioners' gendered experiences with male players, coaches, and organisational staff have impaired practitioner-client relationship development.
	Limited buy-in from coaches, players, and organisation staff	Poor buy-in and underdeveloped practitioner-client relationships can lead to psychology not being prioritised in player schedules, and individual players being cold or not engaging with us as practitioners.
Esports Time	Esports Pace	Dynamic roster changes and faster seasons in esports have led to us compromise on needs analyses and limited long-term work with players
	Esports Working Hours	Esports work is often at unsociable hours and, without notice, can be hard to schedule with other commitments.
Financial Barriers	Culture of unpaid sport and exercise psychologists in training	Trainee sport and exercise psychologists often work unpaid to fulfil their training requirements.
	Poor payment culture in esports	Esports organisations are also notoriously unreliable in their payments to staff
	The cost of unpaid work	Paid work elsewhere is needed to compensate for unpaid training time. Traditional sports may be better and more

reliably paid.

215

216 **Theme 1: Opportunities**

217   This theme describes how esports' novel performance contexts and infrastructures

218 provide room for flexibility, novelty, and experimentation. Here, we have subthemes of:

219 accessibility, a novel context for sport and exercise psychology development, and having a

220 pioneer role in the industry.

221 *Accessibility*

222   As esports are online, they are far more accessible than traditional sports. Practising

223 sport psychology online can remove geographical and time-based barriers between

224 practitioners and clients (Cotterill & Symes, 2014). As the majority of esports work outside of

225 elite levels is online, we have felt it easier to have more contact with players and staff members:

226

227   What allows me to engage with the industry now as a practitioner is the ability to do so

228   online. ... I have chosen to live with my parents so that I can afford to spend my time

229   working and developing as a practitioner, rather than move out and spend the majority of

230   my working hours in irrelevant part-time work in order to pay for more expensive living

231   costs.

232

233   Ability to access esports teams and organisations online facilitates working from home,

234 which entirely removes transport costs and time. Thus, at the beginning of training, where paid

235 work is more scarce, online remote work may be much more financially feasible. We have been

236 able to work in esports without paying additional costs of time and money associated with

237 transport, professional clothing, or even office space. Even if we decide to expand into other

238 performance or exercise contexts areas later in our development as sport and exercise

239 psychologists, our earlier work in esports has allowed us to accessibly develop our skills,

240 understanding, and confidence while working less time in unrelated paid work to pay training

241 expenses.

242   Our increased accessibility to esports teams, players, and staff has also facilitated

243 engagement and furthered buy-in with teams already accepting and open to us as sport and

244 exercise psychologists (in training):

245

246   I found this easy with my first team despite working online. During workshops and one-

247   to-one 1:1 sessions everyone felt that they could speak freely and casually and all

248   members of the team, including the coach and manager were open with me with regards

249   to what they expected of me but also with how they were feeling and what they were

250   experiencing

251

252   After the first week, I was receiving positive feedback from the players and coach which

253   was fantastic, and I experienced a sense of relief and belonging within the team. I feel

254   like I have never had much of this from the other environments I have worked in, so it

255   made me valued within the team even after just a short time.

256

257   Perhaps it is because I was at the matches, at training, provided consistent one-to-one

258   support, regular workshops, fit in better with the environment and quirks it held, or simply

259   the fact that the team was smaller (five players and two coaches) meaning I could build

260   a better connection with individuals.

261

262   This increased engagement could be for a few reasons. Firstly, it could be due to the

263 online inhibition effect (Suler, 2004) with players and staff feeling more comfortable and open to

264 talk about things online even in our group workshops (Lapidot-Lefler & Barak, 2015). Or, it could

265 also be due to the smaller team and roster sizes in esports compared to traditional sports

266   creating more intimate and supportive environments. It could also be due to one-on-one casual

267   conversations on social media sites such as Discord being more anonymous and confidential

268   than they would be in in-person sporting contexts, or a combination of the above. Regardless of

269   the reason, we have found players and staff accepting of our support to be more accessible to

270   us as practitioners, and we feel the context around online esports may have facilitated

271   practitioner-client relationships in our work.

272   ***A novel context for sport and exercise psychology development***

273   Training in esports also provides new, novel opportunities and contexts to develop and

274   apply our skills and knowledge. We are training to be sport AND exercise psychologists; while,

275   in traditional sport, exercise is often intrinsic to the game, exercise is not intrinsic to esports. As

276   a result, we can not only work to improve exercise participation in esports, but also use exercise

277   to benefit our clients' performance too. While other practitioners may choose to specialise in

278   either sport or exercise, both are applicable within esports, and we have had opportunity to

279   combine both areas of our training in the industry:

280

281   In esports, exercise prior to games can be used to provide a competitive edge. As a

282   trainee sport and exercise psychologist, esports has given me the opportunity to use

283   both parts of my training at once, in a way that traditional sport would not

284

285   Additionally, the remote environment of esports and esports psychology also provide

286   new contexts for growth and development. For example, group interventions, such as exercise,

287   can become more individualised, suiting an individual's preferences, physiology, and fatigue

288   where an in-person exercise intervention may not. As other research has pointed out (Sotirova

289   et al., 2021), online exercise interventions can be more time efficient and convenient. We have

290   found this accessibility and efficiency really helpful when exercising as part of a pre-

291   performance routine prior to an official game:

292

293   I instructed players to exercise at a moderate level in whatever way they liked, with the

294   aim that while some types of exercise may be more optimal for performance increases,

295   doing something they enjoyed would make them more likely to continue exercising

296   independently before games, or at least be onboard with future interventions

297 ***Pioneers in the industry***

298   While esports as an industry is arguably no longer in its infancy, we believe psychology

299 within esports definitely is [Blinded for review]. There is little regulation on psychology within the

300 industry, and while that brings a lot of chaos, it also allows us the opportunity for flexibility and

301 innovation:

302

303   As psychology within esports is still young, there are so many opportunities for research,

304   applied work, and even moulding the field to become more informed about what

305   performance psychology looks like in esports

306

307   Esports is seen as an unknown entity by many sport psychology practitioners. Previous

308 reflections from practitioners have noted a lack of within industry-based tutorage (Ramaker &

309 Pedraza-Ramirez 2023) due to the infancy of psychology within esports. We echo this

310 sentiment:

311

312   I felt very uncertain about what it should or could look like within this new performance

313   context. One reason I had this concern was that I did not know anyone working within

314   the field. When I reached out to people in my network (e.g., mentors, lecturers, peers)

315   about this I tended to get funny looks!

316

317   Additionally, a lack of qualified psychologists in esports and esports organisations often

318   not recognising or requiring practical training qualifications with ethical supervision encourages

319   people confident to practice psychology without them. As some of the trained psychologists

320   working and developing within the industry we have the responsibility to set a good precedent

321   and raise the industry up to a similar standard to traditional sports in terms of ethics,

322   professionalism, and evidence-based practice to help the professionals in the industry perform

323   better, more consistently, and more sustainably. We feel there is still much work needed to be

324   done:

325

326   I felt a huge gap in the psychological demands of esports and the supply of qualified

327   psychologists. As a sport and exercise psychologist, I felt there is much attention needed

328   to the context and helping players deal with it's impact on their performance and

329   wellbeing

330 **Theme 2: Alienation**

331   This theme, conversely, highlights the social downsides of developing in esports, often

332   remotely, and behind a screen. Here, we identify themes of online communication barriers,

333   hegemonic masculinity within esports, and limited buy-in from players, coaches, and

334   organisational staff. While we do not believe that all of these issues are unique to esports

335   psychology practice (especially regarding hegemonic masculinity in high performance

336   environments) the persistent remote and often voice- and text-only communication in esports

337   has made it harder to build strong practitioner-client relationships.

338 ***Online communication barriers***

339   Online play requires online communication. Compared to in-person socialising, where a

340   practitioner can judge their social context and a situation from afar, online communication in

341   voice channels presents practitioners with a black box where they are unable to see what is

342   inside without opening it. Cottrell et al. (2019)'s esport recommendations and guidelines discuss

343   the ethics of knowing *how* to use online communication software, however, we feel like the

344   bigger issue is knowing *when* to use online communication software:

345

346   I was unsure what the etiquette was like when joining voice channels during their training

347   and was concerned about speaking when they were busy or stepping on anyone's toes.

348   It is in those group situations when I would wonder what to say, how to say it, and when

349   was the right time to say it.

350

351   Additionally, compared to our other applied work, we have struggled with esports players

352   and coaches normally only using voice chat or text-based communication, rather than video

353   calls, which are more typical for our online services in other performance domains. Other

354   practitioners elsewhere have noted that voice-only communication online can impair the

355   development of practitioner-client relationships compared to in-person as explicit and implicit

356   communication is lost (Cotterill & Symes, 2014). In our experiences with esports, we too feel

357   that voice-only or even text-only communication slows the development of our relationships with

358   staff, coaches and players especially when starting with a new team; in individual and group live

359   sessions too, voice-only communication has also impaired how we have assessed engagement

360   and understanding, and gathered feedback:

361

362   In the beginning, it was challenging to understand the players from behind their closed

363   cameras and therefore, challenging to build rapport and understand interpersonal

364   boundaries and norms of approaching players. This limited the non-verbal feedback

365   when speaking to players - where [the intervention] was helpful, it was hard to exactly

366   gauge how much by

367

368   It is worth noting that where psychology work was done in-person for esports teams,

369   these online communication barriers were no longer an issue:

370

371   A highlight of my work thus far has been working as a practitioner at [an in-person

372   competition]. … This event gave me the opportunity to meet and interact with players so

373   much more naturally and seamlessly than online. Casual conversations, checking in with

374   the players was so much easier. I no longer felt like I was intruding on potentially an

375   important group meeting or interrupting communication and flow of a scrim on a voice

376   channel

377   **_Hegemonic masculinity within esports_**

378   Where trainees were women, and players and staff were men, we felt alienated from the

379   rest of their team because of our gender. Players treated us differently, and made gender-

380   specific comments which upheld gendered-behavioural norms. These gender-based comments,

381   even if intended to be light-hearted, led to a sense of alienation from the rest of the team. We

382   feel this is a symptom of the hegemonic masculinity present within the esports industry (Scholz

383   & Nothelfer, 2022):

384

385   There also seemed to be some 'banter' about me being the only woman in the

386   environment, for example people would say "thanks mum" after sessions and when I

387   joined the voice channels sometimes say "we have to behave now, there's a girl in the

388   room". I assume this was intended in a benevolent and humorous manner, but it does

389   make me feel separated from the team in some ways and reinforces gender stereotypes

390   within the team.

391

392   Gender research within esports argues that esports are male-dominated environments

393   where gender roles are used to minimise female power and agency (Rogstad, 2022). Within

394   esports environments women experience harassment and have to navigate the gender

395   environment, either by performing in line with gendered expectations or hide their femininity

396   altogether to prevent differential treatment (Madden et al., 2021; Rogstad, 2022). The above

397   quote is in line with this, players changed their behaviour, even benevolently, due to their

398   gendered expectations of a women sport psychologist.

399

400   The hegemonic masculinity within the esports community has been linked to the lower

401   participation from women players, especially at the professional level (Hilbert, 2019; Interpret,

402   2019) as women walk away from esports due to social barriers and harassment (Scholz &

403   Nothelfer, 2022). We reflected above that severe effects of hegemonic masculinity such as

404   sexism may be less felt by sport psychologists working in esports compared to players:

405

406   These experiences… typical of those directed at women within esports, focusing on

407   appearance and forms of sexism… led me to question whether I should pursue work in

408   esports but I came to the ultimate conclusion that because I wasn't the player these

409   experiences wouldn't happen, therefore I would be comfortable working in the industry.

410   ***Limited buy-in from coaches, players, and organisation staff***

411   Poor or underdeveloped practitioner-staff/client/player relationships caused by the above

412   can lead to poor buy-in for our interventions. At an organisational staff and coach level, this has

413   manifested in psychology sessions not being prioritised in schedules, and us needing to strongly

414   advocate ourselves for team contact time; at a player level this has led to resistance, coldness,

415   or no responses to our messages altogether:

416

417   During my work with other clients I found this rapport building process incredibly difficult.

418   In the case of the individual, despite multiple different strategies, they were incredibly

419   shut off and therefore it was difficult to establish the goals for our work together. With the

420   other team I worked with, one of the players was very engaged and we built a good

421   relationship over the course of my time there but the other players and the coach made

422   no attempt to build a good relationship, despite multiple efforts on my end.

423

424   Initially, I tried to use a more systems based approach, or at least introduce it in that

425   way, however this did not come to fruition as management and coaching staff did not

426   seem keen on this and kept reiterating the support was only needed for the players.

427

428   There is loads more I would like to do, such as group sessions that build team culture

429   and identity through team values and goals, pressure training …, and working on pre-

430   performance routines. Ultimately, however, I am limited by scheduling

431

432   This leads to a frustrating gap between what us trainees would like to do, and what

433 actually is implemented and prioritised in player and coach schedules. We practise what we

434 preach to players, so it can be frustrating to know first-hand what benefits to their performance,

435 wellbeing, and resilience we have experienced that they could be missing out on. Practitioner-

436 client relationships are relational at their core and require a willingness to work from all parties

437 to be successful and mutually beneficial (Sharp et al., 2015). In cases where we have not

438 already found client team curiosity and willingness to learn about psychology, developing and

439 maintaining client relationships has been predominantly one-sided.

440 **Theme 3 - Esports Time**

441   Esports scheduling, both in training and competitions provide another barrier to practice

442 and development for us trainees. This theme has two subthemes: esports pace and esports

443 working hours.

444 ***Esports Pace***

445   Esport seasons of play happen quicker than traditional sports (Hollist, 2015;

446   Swettenham & Whitehead, 2022). This also means players come and go from organisations

447   faster and rosters are less stable and more dynamic. We, as trainee esports psychologists,

448   have needed to adapt to these systems of working alongside players and staff to effectively

449   integrate within our esports teams.

450   As psychologists developing in this environment, we have had to compromise in our

451   practice: shortening our needs analyses, rushing into action, and missing chances to reflect on

452   our interventions with the team to evaluate what does and does not work. Practitioner-client and

453   player-player relationships can often suffer too, as can feelings of team cohesion, identity and

454   support, because in some cases the team will be disbanded 2-3 months after its creation. Our

455   sentiment is echoed by Brain et al. (2024)'s tale of "crunch time". For practitioners looking to

456   promote long-term, sustainable changes in players and staff, we have found this culture to be

457   saddening and to limit our effectiveness as practitioners:

458

459   Unfortunately, since the Summer Split had already started and was only for the duration

460   of seven weeks, I was required to begin delivering a psychology programme within the

461   environment sooner than I would have with other performance environments, such as in

462   traditional sports

463

464   I felt that if esports organisations keep switching players, how can I help the players in

465   their personal and professional development as a process. New teams will be formed in

466   every split requiring formation of team identity, bonding and cohesiveness and then two

467   months later, they are disbanded. It is infuriating to see this 'in and out' format as a

468   person who values nurturing the individual in the process than to use them as a means

469   to an end

470   ***Esports Working Hours***

471   Working within the esports industry, for anyone involved, is far from a typical 9-5 job.

472   While we need not engage in the long training hours of professional players (Hollist, 2015), we

473   have nonetheless had to adapt to esports' schedule to work and develop as trainees. Only

474   working part-time with teams, however, the fast-pace of esports has been harder to integrate

475   with other life and training commitments without sacrificing session quality. This is especially the

476   case if sessions are scheduled at short-notice, but where notice is given, we have found

477   integrating our different commitments is far more manageable:

478

479   Many competitive matches and training took place in late evenings or at odd timings

480   during the day including weekends. This persisted for the two-three months of the

481   competitive season. Staying up with the team till 11 PM for match observations,

482   meetings with coach and manager and conducting 1-1 individual work on weekends to

483   suit client's availability after their commitments in education and esports was

484   manageable and efficient as I could adjust my other commitments during the day or

485   schedule beforehand with the player

486

487   However, I often don't get a response until Friday and am asked to do this for Sunday,

488   giving me 2 days to complete the work and, as previously stated, my part time job makes

489   that difficult so I either have to delay the session which makes me look less competent

490   or I have to rush and deliver a sub-par session to the client, making it a lose-lose

491   situation

492   **Theme 4 - Financial Barriers**

493   This final theme discusses financial barriers to training as a sport and exercise

494   psychologist in esports. The subthemes we identified are a culture of unpaid sport and exercise

495   psychologists in training, a poor payment culture within esports, and the cost of unpaid work.

496   ***Culture of unpaid sport and exercise psychologists in training***

497   Currently, the majority of work we have been doing in the industry has been unpaid.

498   Despite research-backed benefits of psychology in traditional sport and esports, there is not a

499   strong culture of paying for psychological services. As our qualification and professional

500   development requires training time and client contact over a maximum of four years, we have

501   often resorted to unpaid work to fulfil this requirement, despite, in the current case of the first

502   author, 7 prior years of formal psychology education and training:

503

504   One difficulty that neophyte practitioners face is ensuring that we are paid for the

505   services that we provide, based on my own experiences I believe that this is due to two

506   factors. Initially, we, as neophyte practitioners are required to practise under a title that

507   states that we are in training regardless of how much experience we have, the use of

508   this title when communicating with potential clientele has been a hindrance as I have

509   been questioned as to whether I'm actually allowed to provide the service and have had

510   my services outright refused because I "don't have the right qualifications".

511

512   However, this is not sustainable as a long-term career; at some point I need to get paid

513   for my work to justify my degrees and years of training. It is rare in any other job to do so

514   much training and receive nothing in return.

515   ***Poor payment culture in esports***

516   In addition to the poor payment culture of sport and exercise psychologists in training

517   generally, the esport industry itself presents another financial barrier. Esports are a new industry

518   with less regulations, players and staff members (us included) are more vulnerable to predatory

519   labour practices (Hollist, 2015; Johnson & Woodcock, 2021). In some cases, esports

520   organisations take advantage and exploit players. For example, this year, UK team Lioncreed

521   were removed from their regional League of Legends league, the NLC, for not paying former

522   players (Daniels, 2024). As less essential members of the team than players, we feel our

523   services are less financially prioritised in an already competitive industry, and wonder if would

524   be more financially savvy to train elsewhere:

525

526   Because of these denials of work I, and many other [sport and exercise psychologists (in

527   training)], have had to volunteer our time [in esports] in order to gain enough experience

528   for our qualifications. In addition to this, esports is notorious for not providing payment

529   for services provided, especially to outside staff such as psychologists, making it

530   challenging to solely train in this field.

531

532   I remain slightly doubtful about how financially viable a developing career in esports is

533   long-term … Top practitioners in the area have only joined esports after training

534   elsewhere in in-person, traditional sport with likely more widespread appeal and funding.

535   Should I do the same?

536   **The cost of unpaid work**

537   While unpaid work often is great for our development as trainees, its cost is time that we

538   cannot spend working elsewhere, recovering, or developing other skills. This lack of financial

539   support has led us to either diversify our training to supplement our income, despite our passion

540   and interest for the industry, or sacrifice our social lives and interpersonal development living

541   with our parents:

542

543   I also appreciate that I am in a very privileged position to live with my parents and thus

544   afford to work an unpaid role - without reduced living costs it would not be financially

545   viable to work as much as I do.

546

547   Due to my circumstances I have extended my clientele to more 'mainstream sports' in

548   order to fund my qualifications and bills and have noticed that my experiences within

549   these sports have been more positive overall across all aspects mentioned above

550

551   **Discussion**

552   We set out to describe our experiences of training to be sport and exercise psychologists

553   within esports. In our reflexive thematic analysis of our narratives, we identified several themes

554   which can be divided into the opportunities that esports can provide, and the barriers it presents.

555   Esports undoubtedly provides new, interesting, and exciting opportunities for sport and exercise

556   psychology to provide a competitive, performance advantage for teams, and improve the

557   sustainability of these performances over time. However, financial, scheduling, and social

558   barriers exist within the esports industry and the performance context of esports games - all of

559   which can limit the effectiveness and implementation of psychology for players and

560   organisational staff, and as well as limit the sustainability of developing as a practitioner within

561   esports.

562   This is a bleaker set of reflections than those from full-time esport psychology

563   practitioners at the elite level. Our reflections share some similarities with Ramaker and

564   Pedraza-Ramirez (2023): for example, both describe the opportunities that psychology within

565   esports has as well as navigating esports psychology work online. However, compared to

566   Ramaker and Pedraza-Ramirez (2023), we as trainees experienced far more barriers to

567   practice. The most noticeable difference is arguably in buy-in from organisations and players,

568   both socially and financially, and thus the extent of psychological assessments and

569   interventions they are able to provide. We seemingly face more barriers to implementation at

570   each of the organisational, coach and player levels, which have left us wanting to do more than

571   we are able. While this could be partly a skill and experience difference, where the more

572   experienced practitioners are able to generate more buy-in, this could also be due to these

573   performance psychologists working for organisations and players which already value and

574   prioritise psychology enough to invest money and players' schedule time into it. Greater

575   organisational and coach investment allows both players and practitioners to spend more time

576   working with psychology, and as a result, its beneficial effects are more likely to be realised and

577   the work more rewarding. Lower tier esports organisations may not prioritise investment in their

578   players' wellbeing if their contracts only last 2-3 months.

579   This bleaker outlook may however be partly in-line with current trainee sport and

580   exercise psychologist's feelings and reflections in traditional sports. While a review of new sport

581   psychology practitioners' reflections focused more on emotional and professional barriers and

582   did not mention financial barriers at all (Wadsworth et al., 2021), other research has shown that

583   trainees struggle emotionally compared to established practitioners, and have similar issues in

584   attracting clients to do either paid or unpaid work to complete their qualification (Hings et al.,

585   2020). The extent of these struggles have even led to published calls to action to help support

586   and increase trainee and new practitioners' quality of life (Martin et al., 2021). While this is sad

587   to normalise this experience, it seems that not all our experiences training within esports are

588   unique, and that being able to train as a sport psychologist at all is a financially privileged

589   choice, regardless of the performance environment. Our bleaker outlook compared to Ramaker

590   & Pedraza-Ramirez (2023) may be partly representative of overall differences in outlooks

591   between trainee and established sport and performance psychology practitioners (e.g., Martin et

592   al., 2021), and may even suggest that the sunnier reflections from Ramaker & Pedraza-Ramirez

593   (2023) could be out of selection bias. For those two authors that have found successful jobs in

594   the industry, how many have not? Only time will tell for us which group we will fall into.

595   Perhaps this bleaker outlook may also be due to hegemonic masculinity within esports

596   affecting how psychological support is perceived and prioritised by players and organisations.

597   Above we discussed how the female-presenting authors of this article have had explicit

598   gendered experiences. However, esport's hegemonic masculinity culture may also lead to an

599   implicit stigma towards psychology, or at least a reluctance to invest in it. If esports

600   organisations, teams, or players adopt and buy into the hegemonic masculinity ideals of being

601 dominant, hierarchical, and unemotional (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Scholz & Nothelfer,

602 2022), they may be less likely to be vulnerable and discuss their feelings (Smoliak et al., 2022),

603 especially in such a fast-paced, competitive industry where being seen as flawed and imperfect

604 may feel contradictory to securing jobs. This may lead players to initially reject any psychology,

605 but especially approaches that encourage the mindfulness and acceptance of thoughts and

606 feelings, rather than suppression, avoidance, or rationalisation through rational emotive therapy,

607 relaxation, or self-talk (see Horne & Swettenham, 2024 for a discussion). Encouraging the

608 acceptance of emotionality in men has been suggested for better wellbeing and gender equality

609 in therapy (Smoliak et al., 2022). In esports too, encouraging and accepting emotionality from all

610 gender identities may promote wellbeing and the acceptance of psychological help.

611 Perhaps the bleaker outlook we present is also bleaker because of my (the first author's)

612 current life situation. After all, we use a reflexive thematic analysis in this paper, and thus it is

613 important to reflect on how our own positionality and context may affect our conclusions (Braun

614 & Clarke, 2019, 2021). As said above, my financial, living, and social situation is not what I

615 would want it to be; I am choosing to sacrifice my social and economic development in order to

616 pursue work that is meaningful for me. I do so willingly and this is not a choice I would change,

617 but would this outlook be so bleak if I and other authors had financial freedom and/or fulfilling

618 social lifes? Perhaps not. On the other hand I would not even be writing this paper if I was not

619 able to move back in with my parents and have fewer living costs? Voices of people that neither

620 have parental support nor time to write and submit articles for peer-reviewed journals may not

621 even be heard. Perhaps we are better off than many that could never even afford to start.

622 Regardless, we have not found our current approach to training in esports to be

623 financially sustainable long-term. Especially as trainees, we are also paying for supervision and

624 qualification costs to stay ethical and professional, all on top of our living costs. While esport

625 professionals at the top level are paid, it remains to be seen whether the esports industry is able

626 to financially fund the development of its own practitioners, or will have to continue borrowing

627   practitioners who trained in traditional sport. This is especially a concern as the esports

628   industry's business model is not as affluent as in traditional sports (Carreras et al., 2024). In

629   light of these accounts, Romain Bigeard (2024)'s advice of training elsewhere first and then

630   moving to esports could be more paternal. As much as current practitioners encourage the

631   development of practitioners within the industry (Ramaker & Pedraza-Ramirez, 2023), it might

632   be a more financially savvy option to supplement our incomes with practitioner work outside of

633   esports until we have the knowledge and experience to apply for top-tier teams, as current elite

634   level practitioners have done. An argument that could be made here is that training is not

635   supposed to be sustainable; however, it is rare in any other job role and even other disciplines

636   of psychology to have such little financial infrastructure to support development,

637   apprenticeships, assistants, and junior staff members.

638   However, are we just marketing ourselves badly? It is easy to blame the industry while

639   taking little responsibility ourselves. In both our general education in sport and exercise

640   psychology and groups in esports, we have been told specifically to not give our work away for

641   free where possible, as doing so devalues our work and the work of other qualified sport (and

642   exercise) psychologists in the industry. Thus, we have arguably been unethical in how we have

643   been training so far, without payment, even without an experience-base. Now we all have

644   experience, ethical supervision and guidelines, and industry-leading psychology knowledge as a

645   foundation for future practice ([Blinded for review]), there are even fewer reasons why we

646   should not be charging for our services. After all, either inside or outside of esports, we can

647   absolutely provide a competitive edge to performance, and do so in a sustainable, meaningful

648   way (Horne & Swettenham, 2024).

649   **Limitations**

650   A limitation of this paper is its generalisability to other trainee sport and exercise

651   psychologists aspiring to work in esports. While some of our experiences may not be unique,

652   such as unpaid work (Hings et al., 2020) the contexts they are derived from are. While it might

653   be possible for our readers to work with the same people as we have done, there are minimal

654   chances of you working with the same teams, and no chance whatsoever of you working with

655   the same teams at the same point in time. Autoethnography is not a method that especially

656   encourages generalisation (Holt & Strean, 2001; Sparkes, 2000), and thus we can offer no

657   guarantee your experiences will be anything like ours, especially if your context (e.g., social

658   relationships, financial situation, gender) is different to our own. What we do hope, however, is

659   through reading this article and our recommendations below, you are better prepared for the

660   barriers to esports training we have highlighted, if you experience them.

661   Another limitation is this article's bounded authenticity and depth through how our

662   experiences are presented. Due to the ethical barriers around retrospective autoethnography

663   (Bochner, 2017; Edwards, 2021), we chose to prioritise relational ethics as much as possible.

664   This meant potentially fictionalising details (Eliastam et al., 2018) and/or removing identifying

665   content to protect our clients' anonymity as much as possible. We note above that our quotes

666   and experiences are neither linked to a practitioner through name or frequency, nor can be

667   trusted to be true at all. While we have worked to maintain meaning throughout the process, the

668   individual details that remain cannot be completely trusted. While this limits authenticity,

669   especially at a quote-basis, we feel that this approach is compatible with the paper: instead of

670   focusing on particular client cases and interventions (e.g., Swettenham & Whitehead, 2022), we

671   instead step back to evaluate our own developmental experiences within the industry. From this

672   perspective, any individual case, intervention, or client relationship is less influential on our

673   overall experiences.

674   **Our Recommendations**

675   It would be fantastic here to be able to provide concrete guidelines and

676   recommendations to help other practitioners in the same position as us trainees. However,

677   considering the above it feels hypocritical to say we have things all figured out or provide any

678   guaranteed tricks of the trade.

679   So far advice of practitioners has encouraged trainees to expect challenges, to reach out

680   and intern at terms to get experience, and to present their ideas clearly (Ramaker & Pedraza-

681   Ramirez (2023). Other trainees have similarly argued for self-care, flexibility in practice, and

682   engagement in online practice (Brain et al., 2024). However, we feel this advice is brief, so

683   below we attempt to build on their points with some grounded suggestions. We can of course

684   make no promises that they will make you hugely successful in the industry as most of us are

685   not either, so please take this advice with heavy scepticism. What we do hope to provide,

686   however, is some guidelines that, regardless of your success, should make you a better sport

687   and exercise psychologist.

688   ***Be your own first client***

689   Before you even start to find other clients, you should try everything you plan on

690   teaching others for yourself. Self-practice is essential not only to your understanding of the

691   techniques and their benefits, but also your understanding of yourself (Pack et al., 2014). Self-

692   practice can also help build the resilience (or psychological flexibility; see Horne & Swettenham,

693   2024) that you will need to navigate the barriers we have highlighted above (Quartiroli et al.,

694   2022). Self-practice is essential for a practitioner's quality of life and arguably an ethical

695   requirement in order to maintain effective long-term care for your clients (Quartiroli et al., 2022).

696   I (the first author) cannot recommend Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and its

697   performance and wellbeing applications enough (ACT; Gardner & Moore, 2004; Hayes et al.,

698   1999; Horne & Swettenham, 2024), but there are other approaches you could use too (see Tod

699   & Eubank, 2020).

700   This is easy to say but this is the most important of the advice we give here. Learning to

701   progressively become more psychologically flexible or resilient - overcoming barriers which may

702   have drawn you to psychology in the first place - will allow you to navigate an uncertain industry

703   and rebound from rejections, and to speak from your heart when you ask others to do as you

704   do. In my case I am passionate about what I do because ACT and ACT-based interventions

705   have transformed both my mental health, productivity and work quality; 2 years ago I was

706   diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and was experiencing panic

707   attacks from forgetting university assignments, now many of my ADHD symptoms are probably

708   below average. Mental roadblocks that used to derail my whole day I can now glide over, and I

709   feel joy and purpose for the first time in my life. Be your own first client - "live your principles out

710   loud" (Busanich & Baird, 2024, p.29) - everything else will follow.

711   ***Know your philosophy***

712   Following on from the above, it is not just important to know what interventions work to

713   improve performance and wellbeing, but also why they work, and how they can fit together

714   within a coherent model of practice (Horne & Swettenham, 2024). Ramaker & Pedraza-Ramirez

715   (2023) recommend succinctness and clarity in presentations; we believe that this comes with

716   practice and a clear understanding of your work and role. People will ask you to elaborate on

717   what you present either out of malice or curiosity and you should prepare, as best you can, to

718   respond to both as they were the latter. Having a rich, deep understanding of your interventions

719   and how they improve performance and/or wellbeing makes this remarkably easier. We strongly

720   recommend that trainee sport and exercise psychologists develop their own professional

721   philosophy and identity (e.g., Horne & Swettenham, 2024; Quartiroli et al., 2024) if you are

722   looking to be a flexible, dynamic, purposeful practitioner that can react to answer client

723   questions well, and be proactive in designing interventions and intervention programs based on

724   client needs.

725   ***Outreach to teams***

726   We agree with Ramaker and Pedraza-Ramirez (2023) that reaching out to teams that

727   are not currently advertising can be a good way to find work and internships with esports teams,

728   and this method has worked for us. However, if teams respond they may say they do not have

729   the budget to pay you. If you still want to work at this organisation this gives you a couple

730   options.

731   You could get creative and suggest an alternative financial agreement. Even if the team

732   has no budget, are they able to offer you with a % of the total winnings? Naturally this would not

733   provide you with a consistent or guaranteed income, but having a contract with a % of winnings

734   provides no financial risk to the organisation in taking you on as a new practitioner while still

735   providing some buy-in to your services. Additionally, as this % of winnings is likely also split with

736   players, this may increase their motivation to work with you and develop from your skill set. We

737   appreciate this may not sit comfortably with some practitioners and they may argue that it

738   prioritises performance outcomes over personal growth. However, we disagree. Given

739   organisations do already give players a % of prize money as winnings, working on a no-win, no-

740   free basis provides psychological support for players with no additional financial risk should they

741   lose. While we have not heard of this type of contract being made by psychology practitioners in

742   esports psychology, it is not unheard of in traditional sport.

743   Alternatively, you could work as an unpaid intern. However, if you are still going to work

744   for free, please ensure you are doing so on your own terms, and for an organisation that will still

745   value and invest in you socially if not financially. Even if they cannot pay you, can they still

746   promote you as a professional in the industry, can they help you network with others? The more

747   you can learn about clinical theory and healthy behaviour (e.g., Hayes et al., 1999; Horne &

748   Swettenham, 2024), the more you should be able to discern psychologically healthy, value-

749   driven members of the industry from the rest. If an organisation's management is not able to

750   invest in you and your services, either socially or financially, this could be a red flag for how

751   much buy-in you will be able to get from the coaches and players they do hire. In the worst

752   case, this could mean that you become tied to an organisation that provides you with no

753   experience, no financial support, and could restrict you getting either from elsewhere. In all

754   cases of unpaid please discuss a finite time period to reaffirm the expectation that you cannot

755   work for free forever.

756

Conclusion

Not only is there opportunity for sport and exercise psychology trainees to give esport teams a competitive edge but also a well-researched need for sport psychology's wellbeing services. Esports are novel performance environments that provide accessibility to geographically isolated trainees, while also presenting new, novel challenges to learn and adapt to. However, as trainees in the industry, we are struggling and facing more barriers to practice than elite level practitioners. It is tempting to follow industry professionals' advice to train in traditional sports first (Bigeard, 2024), and doing so may be more sustainable financially and make our training experiences more comprehensive. However, only training in traditional sports may mean we are less prepared when we do later try to return to esports, so perhaps a combination of both is best. Training within esports is not for the half-hearted, however if you are committed to the industry, inspired by the opportunities it presents, and not put off by these barriers, we strongly encourage you to join us in helping level up the ethics, professionalism, and research-based practice of sport and exercise psychology within esports. Perhaps we can even help erode the gendered norms and hegemonic masculinity within the industry. We will certainly try - only time will tell whether we will succeed.

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