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E sports: A competitive electronic sports

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Abstract

During recent years, eSports (electronic sports) have become one of the most rapidly growing forms of new media driven by the growing provenance of (online) games and online broadcasting technologies. Esports is a form of sports where the primary aspects of the sport are facilitated by electronic systems; the input of players and teams as well as the output of the eSports system are mediated by human-computer interfaces. Esports will be a medal sport in Asian Games 2022, Hangzhou (China). All India Inter-University and inter-college tournaments are also started 3 years back since 2016. Students/Athletes are also given scholarships and weightage in admission at college and university level. Like any other sports, it is a collection of hardcore skills, determination & the ability to withstand pressure. Playing competitive video games requires some of the same skills as traditional sports, such as thinking strategically, learning to work as a team and putting forth strong individual effort. But eSports are a sedentary activity - so it is important to make sure that all that time spent gaming is balanced with physical exercise and games deemed too violent or age-inappropriate won't be allowed.

Keywords: E Sports, violence, Asian games, online gaming, sports

Introduction

ESports is as "a form of sports where the primary aspects of the sport are facilitated by electronic systems; the input of players and teams as well as the output of the eSports system are mediated by human-computer interfaces." (Juho Hamari, Max Sjoblom, 2017) [17] In more practical terms, eSports commonly refer to competitive (pro and amateur) video gaming that is often coordinated by different leagues, ladders and tournaments, and where players customarily belong to teams or other "sporting" organizations which are sponsored by various business organizations. eSports are organized competitions where players-often referred to as 'athletes'-face off against each other in multiplayer video games. In some form or other, eSports themselves have been around for as long as multiplayer video games have. However, improvements in technology, internet connectivity and online streaming services have seen them surge in popularity.

During recent years, eSports (electronic sports) have become one of the most rapidly growing forms of new media driven by the growing provenance of (online) games and online broadcasting technologies. It has been estimated that more than 70 million people watched eSports during 2013 (Warr, 2014) [1]. According to a report, the global eSports audience was estimated to be 380 million in 2018, made up of 165 million enthusiasts and 215 million occasional viewers and the eSports industry will

reach $1.4 billion by 2020. Many of viewers tune in via online streaming services such as Twitch and YouTube, which air highly polished coverage of the tournaments. However, esports has also recently entered the mainstream with broadcast giant ESPN starting to provide live coverage of major competitions. Audiences at home aren't the only people enjoying esports. The major events regularly sell out arenas and stadiums across the globe. It is a Spectator Sport now with more than 400 Million esports fans in 152 countries that watch these competitions online through various streaming platforms like Twitch.tv, YouTube Gaming. Asia-Pacific accounts for 53% growth in the Audience for year 2018.

League of Legends World Championship-2018 finals were watched online by 100 Million Unique viewers.

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Esports was a demonstration sport in Asian Games-2018, Esports will be a medal sport in Asian Games 2022, Hangzhou (China). (http://esportsfederation.in/) All India Inter – university and inter-college tournaments are also started 3 years back since 2016. Students/Athletes are also given scholarships and weightage in admission at college and university level.

In a quest to define eSports; focus more deeply on what constitutes the "e" in eSports (Taylor, 2012; Taylor and Witkowski, 2010; Witkowski, 2009, 2012) [8-9, 4, 3]. The crucial question is what portions or aspects of the sport have to be electronic and/or computer mediated for a sporting activity to be counted as an eSports. The main difference between a sport and an eSports comes down to where the player or team activities that determine the outcomes of the sport/play are manifested. In traditional sports, all outcome-defining activities can be seen to happen in "the real world," even though the sport's practitioners may employ electronic and computerized systems to aid the sporting activities. However, here question arises that in eSports, the outcome-defining activities happen in a "virtual world", or in other words within electronic/digital/computer-mediated environments. The outcome-defining activities are coordinated, orchestrated and operated by human beings in the "real world"; however, it is not the physical and practical circumstance that the player inhabits that ultimately defines the outcome of play, but rather the system states that exist within the confines of the electronic system (which is controlled by the player and governed by the rules of the eSport's software and technology). Given that the playing humans occupy the "physical world," but the outcome-defining events of eSports happen in the "virtual world," then eSports athletes are always required to use or otherwise interact with a human-computer interface that connects their bodies to the electronic system.

Acceptance of eSports

ESports have only recently enjoyed wide international adoption, and there is still resistance as to whether eSports can truly be considered as a sport. This conceptual conundrum is a pertinent issue for not only defining eSports, but also for drawing the boundaries of what we understand as being sports in general. It appears that many (especially the fans of "traditional" sports) are of the opinion that eSports cannot be called a sport, simply because the player competence is not measured via either their physical prowess or finesse as the eSports athletes appear to be simply sitting riveted to their chairs. In reality, the body and physical activities of the player are still an important part of the overall sporting activity (Witkowski, 2012) [6]. Although the outcome-defining events of the sport occur within the confines of an electronic, computer-mediated environment, it does not in any way imply that eSports cannot be physically taxing for the players (Taylor and Witkowski, 2010; Witkowski, 2009, 2012) [4, 3, 6]. How taxing eSports is physically depends on the modus of human-computer interaction that is required to control the game states of the game's software or system. In dancing (video) games, for example, players are physically drained from interacting with the computer. eSports are commonly organized around specific genres of games, such as multiplayer online battle arenas (e.g. League of Legends, Dota 2), first-person shooters (e.g. Counter-Strike: Global Offensive), real time strategy (e.g. Starcraft 2), collectible card games (e.g. Hearthstone) or sports games (e.g. FIFA-series), therefore they form many sub-cultures within eSports, in the same way that "traditional" sports do. However,

eSports are not commonly perceived as "electronic" versions of "traditional" sports such as soccer, basketball, or track and field sports even though such simulations of "traditional" sports are also played as eSports (such as the FIFA and NHL games).

Spectating on eSports can be superficially seen as a similar activity to spectating on any sports. Most commonly, eSports are being consumed by watching live streams on the internet, where in addition to watching the event, spectators can participate in surrounding social interaction, for example, in the form of chat features. As eSports are computer mediated, spectating can never be without computer-mediated aspects as spectators watching an eSports event "live" have to eventually watch events from a computer output such as a video screen or a monitor.

Literature on eSports is still rare and dispersed, and most of this body of literature has focused on the qualitative documentation of visible phenomenon in tournaments (Carter and Gibbs, 2013 [10]; Cheung and Huang, 2011 [11]; Hutchins, 2008 [12]; Seo and Jung, 2014 [13]; Seo, 2016 [14]; Taylor, 2012a, b [8, 9]; Wagner, 2006; Witkowski, 2009, 2012) [3, 6]. Published quantitative research on the questions of why people watch eSports or why players wish to attend eSports events is, as of yet, non-existent. Thus far, only one study has been published on the reasons for watching eSports (Weiss and Schiele, 2013) [15], and it finds that competition, challenge and escapism were positively associated with eSports use. However, the study measured the general motivational aspects related to playing video games, and thus it makes it extremely difficult to compare the results to other works on media viewing. Other qualitative literature suggests that the reasons for eSports consumption should in principle correspond to those of traditional sports. For example, based on an interview study, Cheung and Huang (2011) [11] remarked that eSports consumption motivations fairly well correspond to those of traditional sports (using the motivation scale for sports consumption (MSSC) scale of Trail and James, 2001). However, given that their study was qualitative in approach, there was no way to infer how salient the different motivations were, or how associated they might be with frequency in eSports consumption.

Like other media, media content consumption and information technology adoption research, the research on sports consumption and spectatorship is commonly interested in the motivations of why people consume it, how they consume it, as well as what kinds of needs the given form of media/technology might gratify. Thus far, sports consumption research has been mostly conducted in the area of sports management. However, with the rise of eSports, sports are increasingly becoming a computer-mediated form of media and information technology which may entail novel ways of information technology use. This is especially so because eSports media content is conveyed through computerized broadcasting (such as internet streaming), and because the sporting activity itself is computer mediated. This makes eSports an increasingly interesting subject of study for the area of information technology in general.

Impact on youth

Putting in the hours required to get good at anything takes a toll. Esports carry risks for the body - and, possibly, the developing brain. The eight to 12 hours that many top esports players say they train per day has led to an increase in computer-related injuries, including carpal tunnel syndrome, repetitive strain injury and back pain. And

after several competitors suffered collapsed lungs (Nathan Grayson, Kotaku reporter 2017) [17], players are being warned not to hold their breath during intense moments. Though esports don't have the same physical risks as contact sports such as football, pro players and ex-pros complain of burnout. How a high volume of video-game playing affects the human brain is the subject of ongoing research. Video games can change your brain: Studies investigating how playing video games can affect the brain have shown that they can cause changes in many brain regions. Frontiers. (2017, June 22). Some studies indicate playing video games could be beneficial. But it could have negative effects on a person's thinking, understanding of the world and other brain processes, including creating addiction. Also potentially problematic are the games themselves, which can be violent; research shows that overexposure to such violent media can lead to aggressive thoughts and behavior. For example a survivor of the February 14 shootings at Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida said "I grew up playing video games... first-person shooter games, and I would never, ever dream of taking the lives of any of my peers.", And In Munich, Germany, an 18-year-old gunman who killed nine people in July 2016 was a fan of first-person shooter video games, according to reports. On Sunday, August 26, 2018 an eSports gamer killed two competitors and injured 10 others in Jacksonville, FL. at the Madden 19 Southeast Qualifier, a competition sanctioned by the Madden Championship Series. The shooting, live-streamed to thousands of fans watching on Twitch, stands as the first mass shooting to occur at a professional sporting event (Knight, 2019) [2]. This detail led many to worry that violent video games may be negatively affecting their own children.

Professionalism in esports

Professional esports players are typically sponsored by companies affiliated with video games, including game developers and game-controller manufacturers, and the players compete for multimillion-dollar prizes. Conservative estimates project that the global esports market will be a $1.5 billion industry by 2020 (billions less than other national pro sports).

Some esports athletes are raking it in. The prize pools are setting world records, The International - 8 (TI8) had a prize pool of ~$ 26,000,000 and overall more than $ 112 000,000 was given as prize money in 2017. Pro Players are making Millions of Dollars in Salaries (http://esportsfederation.in/). Really good players can get sponsored, get paid to produce YouTube promotional videos or even sign with teams. Fortnite phenom Tyler "Ninja" Blevins reportedly makes $500,000 per month and the Dota 2 player Saahil "Universe" Arora can pull down six figures per tournament (not counting league salaries). But it's the very rare player who qualifies at that level. And the life span of a professional gamer is even shorter than that of a pro football or baseball player - usually from age 19 to 25.

Conclusion

Esports is an emerging competitive electronic game worldwide; and it is increasing and gaining popularity as rise in use of electronic media as in other fields among youth. As there is rapid access to smart objects, online gaming, professional esports, and mobile gaming, is becoming a burgeoning industry in India as well. Now it has been introduces in colleges and universities since last 3 three years. Game programmers has introduced a lot of violence in

designing various videogames to make it more thrilling and interesting, which has impact on the thought process and behavior of teenagers. Check and care must be taken by parents as to the relative newness of esports; the jury is still out on the impact on children. Violence against competitors and among fans has occurred - as it could in any open setting. If a child wants to watch a live competition, find out about the level of security at the venue, and take the normal precautions with kid attending any large event. Games deemed too violent or age-inappropriate won't be allowed - or may be allowed in some areas but not others.

Though esports, like any other sports, is a collection of hardcore skills, determination & the ability to withstand pressure. Playing competitive video games requires some of the same skills as traditional sports, such as thinking strategically, learning to work as a team and putting forth strong individual effort. Being a part of a team can be beneficial in a kid's life, so long as the coach and other team members help create a supportive environment. But eSports are a sedentary activity - so it is important to make sure that all that time spent gaming is balanced with physical exercise.

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