

ELECTRONIC SPORTS (E-SPORTS): A GLOBAL PHENOMENON AFFECTING SPORTS CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

This research presents a comprehensive analysis of the psychological and social impacts of participation in eSports, a global phenomenon that has enriched sports culture. Through a literature review approach, this research explores player motivation, online identity, and the mental health impact of playing intensity. In addition, the research integrates cross-cultural dimensions, discussing the interaction of eSports with cultural values in various societies. The results provide deep insights into the complexity of individuals' experiences of eSports and the central role of online communities in shaping social identities. While this research makes important contributions, the limitations of limited primary data, publication age, and cultural representation must be acknowledged. In conclusion, this research underscores that eSports is not only a growing e-sports phenomenon, but also a significant cultural force, shaping norms and values in contemporary sports culture. This research provides a basis for further understanding and points the way for future research that can broaden the scope and deepen the analysis of the impact of eSports on global sports culture.

Keywords : eSports, Sports Culture, Psychological Impact of eSports

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INTRODUCTION

Along with technological advancements and global connectivity, electronic sports or eSports has grown into a significant global phenomenon in recent years. eSports, which initially started as a hobby activity among video game lovers, has now transcended its virtual boundaries and entered the main stage as a widely recognized form of sport (Mulachela et al., 2020). The development of eSports not only includes an increase in the number of players and viewers, but has also changed the cultural landscape of the sport as a whole (Hamari & Sjöblom, 2017). ESports players are now well-known figures with large fan bases, eSports tournaments attract major sponsors, and streaming platforms provide live access to matches for millions of people around the world (Chung et al., 2019).

However, along with rapid popularity comes questions and debates regarding the legitimacy, ethics and long-term impact of this phenomenon. How is eSports affecting society's mindset towards the traditional definition of sports? What are the implications for players' mental and physical health? How can regulation and competitive structures support the industry's continued growth? It is therefore important to delve deeper into the phenomenon of eSports as an integral part of contemporary sporting culture, identify its positive and negative impacts, and understand how this development permeates conventional sporting values. This article will discuss the sporting paradigm shift caused by eSports and detail its impact on sporting culture globally.

In recent years, the phenomenon of electronic sports or eSports has experienced rapid growth that has significantly altered the landscape of sports culture. As a form of sport that initially emerged as a hobby activity among video game enthusiasts, eSports has now transcended its virtual boundaries and become an integral part of global sports culture (Kurniawan, 2019). Several previous studies provide in-depth insights into the impact and changes brought



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about by eSports. In a study (Chikish et al., 2019) titled "eSports: A New Era for the Sports Industry and a New Impulse for the Research in Sports (and) Economics", an analysis of the history of eSports, the growth of viewership, and its influence on public perception of sports is comprehensively outlined. The results of this research provide an understanding of the history of eSports and how this phenomenon has become a major player in changing global sports culture. By detailing the historical development, the article is able to highlight how eSports evolved from a hobby to a recognized global phenomenon. Meanwhile, the research by (Kelly & Leung, 2021) "The New Frontier of Esports and Gaming: A Scoping Meta-Review of Health Impacts and Research Agenda. " highlights the psychological and social impact, exploring player motivation, online community effects, and potential mental health impacts associated with playing intensity. Findings on player motivation, online community effects, and mental health impacts can help identify the challenges and opportunities faced by players in this competitive environment.

Finally, the cross-cultural research by (Mao, 2021) titled "The structural characteristics of esports gaming and their behavioral implications for high engagement: A competition perspective and a cross-cultural examination" provides a perspective on how eSports interacts with different cultural values around the world. Detailing the findings of these studies, this article will discuss the evolution of eSports as a global phenomenon that not only engages millions of players and spectators, but also modifies the cultural norms of conventional sports. Previous research on eSports provides an important basis for understanding the role and impact of this phenomenon in today's sporting culture. By linking the findings from these studies to the focus of the proposed research, we can form a solid foundation for further detailing how eSports influence sports culture.

Furthermore, the research "Esports Fan Engagement : A Comparison of PC and Console Esports Team Fans" provides an understanding of how fans interact with eSports compared to traditional sports. This can guide the discussion on how the eSports fan base is developing and whether there are significant differences in fan engagement between the two. By integrating these findings, the article to be researched can present a comprehensive understanding of how eSports influence sports culture, considering psychological, social and cultural aspects in a global context (Huettermann & Pizzo, 2022).

METHOD

The research method to be applied is a comprehensive literature review approach. The initial stage of this research involves identifying relevant literature sources from various databases such as sciencedirect, eric and google scholar. The literature search will focus on the topics of eSports, sports culture, psychology, and other related aspects to ensure a holistic literature framework. Furthermore, inclusion and exclusion criteria will be established to screen the literature included in the review. Such criteria may include the year of publication, relevance to the research topic, and the research methodology used in the publication. With this approach, the literature research will keep the focus on the most relevant and high-quality information, creating a solid knowledge base for an in-depth analysis of the impact of eSports on sports culture. These steps will ensure that the literature research covers a current and thorough understanding of the eSports and sports culture phenomenon, supporting the goal of a comprehensive analysis. The analysis in this study will involve a series of systematic steps to understand the impact of eSports on sports culture. First, a mapping of themes and trends will be conducted to identify key issues emerging from the relevant literature. The analysis will focus on the psychological, social, cultural and regulatory aspects that affect the world of eSports. Next, an evaluation of the research methodology of the included literature will help assess the strengths and weaknesses of the research that has been conducted, providing a basis for an assessment of the reliability of the findings. A comparison between fan engagement in eSports and traditional sports will provide insight into the shifting preferences and behaviors of fans in the eSports era. The analysis will also include identifying patterns of psychological and social impacts, including player motivation, online community formation, and mental health impacts. Furthermore, the study of eSports regulation will provide an understanding of the influence of current regulations on competition, player welfare, and industry growth. Cross-cultural analysis will involve an in-depth understanding of how eSports interacts with cultural values in different societies. Finally, current findings will be summarized to present the state of the art in the field of eSports, creating a solid knowledge base for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of this phenomenon on sports culture.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

This research aims to explore and understand the recent evolution of electronic sports (eSports) as a significant global phenomenon in sports culture. Detailing the psychological and social impacts, this research will investigate player motivation, online community formation, and mental health impacts associated with participation in eSports. In addition, this research will compare fan engagement in eSports with traditional sports, considering whether there are changing trends in fan preferences and behavior. Regulatory aspects will also be scrutinized in depth, identifying how current regulations affect competition, player well-being and overall industry growth. In addition, cross-cultural analysis will provide an understanding of how eSports interacts with cultural values in different societies around the world. Through presenting the state of the art, this research aims to gather and present up-to-date information on trends, developments, and innovations in the eSports industry, maintaining the relevance of the research in the context of ongoing changes in the field. As such, this research is expected to make a valuable contribution to our understanding of the role of eSports in sports culture as well as its implications on psychological, social, and cultural levels

This study produced significant findings regarding the psychological and social impacts of participating in eSports. In terms of psychological impact, results show that eSports players' motivations are influenced by a number of factors, including a sense of accomplishment, online identity, and the drive to compete. These findings provide deep insights into the factors that drive active participation in the world of eSports. In addition, the analysis also highlights that the intensity of playing eSports can have an impact on players' mental health, with the risk of addiction and stress levels meriting serious attention.

In the context of social impact, the research found that eSports plays a central role in forming strong online communities. These communities become important platforms for players to interact, share experiences and strengthen their online identities. This understanding underscores the significant role eSports plays in shaping social connectivity online, which has far-reaching implications for the way players shape their social relations. With these results, this study contributes valuable information to the understanding of the psychological and social impact of eSports, opening the door for further discussions on player well-being and community dynamics in this ecosystem.

DISCUSSION

Psychological Impact

The results of the study on the psychological impact of participation in eSports are consistent with the findings of previous studies. Intense engagement in eSports, as observed in the study "An exploration of esports fan identity, engagement practices, and motives," can provide strong personal fulfillment and satisfaction for players (Barney & Pennington, 2023). This is in line with motivation theories in sports and gaming that emphasize the importance of achievement to maintain intrinsic motivation. The findings are also in line with previous studies that highlight players' self-identification with their online characters, creating a deep emotional investment in the gaming experience.

However, the findings also reflect some risks of negative impacts, particularly in relation to mental health. This analysis can be linked to the study (Ribeiro et al., 2023; Zhong et al., 2022) which warns about the potential adverse effects of gaming addiction and high stress levels among eSports players. Therefore, these results contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the complexity of the psychological impact of eSports, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach in managing aspects of players' mental health.

Social Impact

In the context of social impact, the findings on the role of eSports in forming online communities are in line with previous research, particularly with eSport vs Sport: A Comparison of Spectator Motives (Pizzo et al., 2017). This previous research shows that, like traditional sports, eSports also creates a strong fan base and communicates through online platforms. In this case, online communities become the main channel for online identity formation and social interaction among players.

However, it is necessary to be open to the risks of previous research that underlines the possible imbalance between online interactions and real-world social relationships. These findings support the analysis (Ribeiro et al., 2023) "Esports and Olympic Games: a cross-cultural exploration of the player support behaviour towards the Olympics". which emphasizes the importance of understanding the cross-cultural implications of online communities. Therefore, discussions of the social impact of eSports should be integrated into a framework that



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considers the complexity of online community dynamics and their influence on real-world social interactions (Adli, 2018). Overall, the discussion of the results of this study provides concrete perspectives and in-depth details, while continuously linking the findings with previous research to strengthen the validity of the findings and present a more comprehensive picture of the psychological and social impact of eSports in sports culture.

This research brings significant contributions to the literature with several aspects that can be considered as novelty. First, the holistic analysis of the psychological and social impact of participation in eSports provides deep insights into player motivation, online identity, and mental health, shedding light on the complexity of individual experiences in the eSports ecosystem. This approach exceeds previous literature reviews that may have only looked at these aspects in isolation. Furthermore, this research enriches the understanding of online communities by integrating cross-cultural engagement in shaping social interactions. By exploring how eSports interacts with cultural values in different societies, this research provides an additional layer in understanding online community dynamics. As such, it plays a role in detailing the global and local implications of the eSports phenomenon.

While this research brings valuable contributions, it is necessary to acknowledge some limitations that may affect the interpretation of the results: 1) This research relies on literature analysis without involving primary data or direct interviews with eSports players. This may limit in-depth understanding of players' direct experiences and views; 2) Most of the literature accessed may have a certain time span. The limitation of publication age may reduce the accuracy of current findings along with the rapid development of the eSports industry; 3) Cross-cultural analysis may not have covered the entire cultural diversity in various societies. This limitation may affect the generalizability of findings related to the interaction of eSports with cultural values. Recognizing these limitations, this study obtained relevant findings and provides a foundation for further research that can broaden the scope and deepen the understanding of eSports in sports culture.

CONCLUSION

This research presents an in-depth understanding of the psychological and social impact of participation in eSports in the context of global sports culture. A holistic analysis of player motivation, online identity and mental health provides rich insights into the complexity of individuals' experiences of eSports. This research also explores online communities by integrating cross-cultural aspects, highlighting the role of eSports in shaping social interactions across different societies. Although this research makes significant contributions, there are some limitations that must be acknowledged, such as limited primary data, publication age, and limited cultural representation. However, recognizing these limitations, this research brings novelty by presenting a detailed and in-depth analysis that can form the basis for further understanding of the eSports phenomenon. In light of these findings, this study enriches the literature on eSports, opening the door for further research that can overcome existing limitations and broaden the scope of understanding the impact of this phenomenon on sports culture. In conclusion, this study confirms that eSports is not only a fast-growing form of electronic sports, but also a global phenomenon that shapes identities, communities and values in contemporary sports culture.

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