Time to Play The Game:Recognizing Esports as a Sport

Introduction

In the past decade video games have grown immensely, specifically the growth of eSports. The competitive side of video games that players all around the world compete in for money trophies and all types of prizes.Since this is a recent thing that is becoming popular a lot of people would question if e Sports can even be considered a sport. A lot of arguments say that it is not even physical to be considered a sport and does it even have the same cultural impact as other sports do.So, the question is if eSports should be considered a sport or not and if it is or isn't why would it be so.

Some research from authors like Jenny et al. (2017) focusses on multiple aspects like the rules, competition, and social components that eSports can provide to the players and the world. While other authors Kari and Karhulahti (2016) show a lot of attention on the training that esports players have to go through cognitively and physically. Some researchers even have similar questions like the research from Seo and Jung (2016) and Witkowski (2012) , they chose to research about the social and non social experiences of eSports players in their community. Showing that eSports is not just a one dimensional thing but it is a very deep community and should get the attention that it deserves. Speaking of attention, authors like Funk et al.(2018) that focus on eSports need to be represented more within the academic and institutional space because there is a big enough community for it to be heard.

That dives into the audience of this paper, scholars that are in sports management could find this paper interesting. Allowing eSports to be more accepted into the sports community may allow classes in this community to grow fuller with different perspectives, jobs and even new

fans.Not only just that category of people will be interested with this paper but also lawmakers, Fans,Players,Educators and more because anyone can learn something new from this and gain a perspective from something that was overlooked in the past.

Literature Review

This work goes over how playing extreme action video games can expand the brain's plasticity and help with learning. The main objective of this study was to test the ability of games to enhance cognitive functions**.** While video games do not teach one exact skill, they do help in recognizing patterns in an environment, controlling attention, and efficiently filtering task-relevant information. Through analyses, researchers have found that using video games that have complex functions can greatly influence learning mechanisms (Bavelier et al., 2012).

This paper is arguing for the inclusion of organized esports and esports management in the world and in academia. In this conceptual analysis that is broken up in two sections. The first is to define what it means to be an esport through different relationships and the other was to increase the devotion to esports in sports management. The results of this paper were that yes esports should be included more in the media, and there should be more attention to esports in sports management academia (Funk et al.,2018).

This article gave insight on different sports and how they relate to that current time. This is a review on literature and the literature provided history on sports around the world. The

reasoning for this article was to inform the reader of some history about sports from a cultural and social perspective (Hazard, 1979) .

This study investigates if E athletes include physical training into their regular training routine.This literature focused on the training habits of Esports players. They found that on average they train 5 hours a day and about 1 hour of that training is physical. Also found that some of the athletes believe it's good for physical health while others do it for performance to find training habits and to find physical activity levels(Kari & Karhulahti, 2016).

This literature review exclaimed the Impact that twitch streaming has had on E sports. The objective was to convey the essence of the literature without changing what was said within the book.Thats what it did it summarized how twitch effectively altered esports engagement(Mertens,2019) .

This empirical research article focuses on Esports and traditional sports viewership.The study explains the motivations that fans have in order to watch esports. They found that the way that esports gets spectated have similar motivations to how traditions sports gets spectated (Hamari &Sjöblom,2017).

This is a conceptual piece of literature that focuses on evaluating the policies and regulations of Esports.To learn about the legal structures and regulations of e-sports.Findings reveal that A lot of the contracts of labor laws, and property rights were found to have gaps within them. (Holden et al.,2017).

The focus of this was to compare the similarities of eSports and physical sports in order to determine if it is a sport or not.Majority of the aspects of Physical sports share the same aspects of E sports including things like competition, rules, and spectating. Supporting the fact that Esports should be considered a sport(Jenny et al.,2017).

This concept explores the possible impact that Esports could have on Traditional sports and the community.They predict that there will be more integration between competitive gaming and traditional sports. The paper was to evaluate the future of competitive gaming and its impact(Jonasson &Thiborg, 2010).

Studied the mental fatigue that Chinese E sports players received while playing games competitively. In this empirical research they found that playing competitive games for too long can bring in a lot of lingering mental fatigue. The focus was to see what can playing competitive gaming for long periods of time have mental effects.(Luo et al.,2022)

This study was made to see what happens when you consider esports as a sport and finding out what the labor looks like and what sensations are revealed. found that Esports players do engage and have some of the same sensations when playing the game comparative to Traditional sports. Focusing on the structure of Esports and the Performance of Esports in comparing it and categorizing it as a sport allowed them to find what they needed(Witkowski,2012).

Exploring the need for regulations and other legal Challenges was the goal for this literature. It found issues in not just player contracts but also team management and labor rights for the players. Focusing on the growth of legal challenges and regulations within E sports was the main objective for this work (Hollist, 2015).

The article shows studies of the social practices within the E sports community as a critical part of the consumption of video games. This empirical study found that Esports brings in a lot of social engagement through collaboration and teamwork. Not only with the players but the community as well. Highlighting the social practices of the Esports community.(Seo & Jung,2016)

This article is attempting to compare Esports versus Empirical study It was found that the emotional attachment to E sports very much Focuses on the engagement of Esports versus the Traditional sports from a spectator's perspective. The goal is to find out the motives of spectators.It imitates or resembles that of Traditional sports engagement of Traditional sports from a spectators Point of view(Pizzo et al.,2018).

In this article the effects on concussion history and other injury risk within college.It was found that athletes with concussions are 58% more likely to receive a lower extremity injury Concussions and its effects on college athletes and how it impacts(Ramirez et al, 2022).

Proposition

Esports should be considered in total as a sport. From an outside viewpoint esports players do need to forgo the same physical intensity training and performances that Traditional athletes go through but Esports players make up for that in cognitive demands,strategic gameplay and competitiveness. Additionally the growing professionalism of eSports with Leagues, Teams and recognition from the world also solidifies it as a sport. I will use research sources that speak on the cognitive demand on Esports and how playing esports also can improve some cognitive functions like decision making and reaction times. Using research from authors like (Bavelier et al.,2012) That has shown positive outlooks on Esports and talks about the challenges that it also serves.With doing that I can compare it to Traditional sports and give a deeper insight on how the two are very similar supporting my Proposition.

Next, Research that I have found also explores the professionalism of Esports. Research from (Funk et al.2018) Funk has supported my proposition by explaining why Esports needs to

be emphasized in institutions and the management within it is very similar to that of traditional sports.To continue this the research from (Hamari and Sjöblom, 2017) has studied the spectatorship of esports and how fans follow,discuss and view the teams that they are interested in,Which can be compared to traditional sports as well.

Discussion

Conclusion

The point of this article is to argue that Esports should get just as much recognition as Traditional sports and to be considered a sport through and through. Given that Esports is heavily digital based a lot of the skills and hardships of players gets overshadowed but Esports has social, cognitive, legal competitive aspects that are aligned with traditional athletic Characteristics.

After reviewing the 15 articles, the research that I have found has led to strong claims that can support the increase in cognitive complexity, strategy and professionalism within eSports.A lot of the authors have similar arguments that further deepens the similar relationship of esports and traditional sports. For example they have similarities in the training,engagement with spectators, competition and performance based on one's skills. Even though a lot of the literature supports the argument, all of them did not create a framework that fully defines esports as a sport.With this conceptual paper it was addressed.This paper is a conceptual paper that used inductive reasoning in order to come to an understanding. Looking at various articles from scholarly sources help to build an argument that is theoretical. Using these research literatures allows for them to be put together and makes it one idea of what constitutes as a sport.

The research from this paper has revealed that eSports satisfies many definitions of what traditional sports are. Various characteristics that traditional sports have as well require skill,competition, training ,mental challenges,and a place for it to be important in a professional infrastructure. Even though eSports lacks in the super physical aspects of traditional sports the findings show that it fulfills the criteria of everything else when it comes to sports. It is in a way redefining sports or adding to it with the digital age that we live in.This paper is a conceptual paper that uses an inductive method.Within this paper there is a combination of sources from academic literature that allows a theoretical argument to be made. Using this method lets me analyse the literature and come to a conclusion on whether eSports can be categorized as a sport or if it can not be.

This paper does answer the question of if eSports should or should not be considered a sport. Esports as a whole does satisfy a lot of the standards that a traditional sport has like its competition, it requires skill, mentally and physically challenging. Sources have confirmed that when it comes to the legal issues for esports organizations and players there's also similarities there. Therefore, the research that has been reviewed throughout this paper supports the claim that esports should be considered as a sport. This paper is important because in the world of Video gaming should be taken seriously as a sport. eSports players work very hard to be at the highest level possible separate from the casual player. It is critical to have proper institutions, policies,management and funding so that this community can thrive into something just as big or become bigger than traditional sports.It also shines a light on ways to improve the community and ask further questions about the health of these players and the support that these players will need in the upcoming future for this growing industry.

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