Opiniones de estudiantes universitarios sobre los deportes electrónicos como actividad de ocio

Opinions of University Students on E-Sports as a Leisure Activity

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Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio es examinar la opinión de estudiantes universitarios que practican el E-Sports como actividad de ocio sobre el tema. La población de la investigación consta de 100 (60 hombres y 40 mujeres) estudiantes que estudian en la Universidad de Hitit, la Facultad de Ciencias del Deporte y diferentes departamentos. En la recopilación de datos se utilizó un cuestionario electrónico que consta de dos partes. En la primera parte, información personal y en la segunda parte, se utilizó un formulario semiestructurado para determinar las opiniones de los participantes sobre los E-Sports. Los métodos de recopilación de datos cuantitativos y cualitativos se utilizaron juntos. Las preguntas cerradas de la encuesta se analizaron de acuerdo con el análisis cuantitativo, y las respuestas dadas a las preguntas abiertas de la encuesta se analizaron de acuerdo con las técnicas de análisis cualitativo. En la evaluación de los datos, se categorizaron las opiniones de los estudiantes quitando los códigos de las respuestas dadas al formulario de opinión. En resumen, se espera que se cree conciencia sobre los deportes electrónicos en la sociedad, lo que hará que la federación en Turquía se vuelva activa y el apoyo de las universidades aumente gradualmente. Sin embargo, es posible que los estudiantes evalúen los deportes electrónicos como una actividad de tiempo libre y lo planifiquen como una carrera en el futuro.

Palabras clave: Ocio, E-Sports, estudiantes universitarios, técnica de investigación cualitativa.

Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the opinions of university students who play E-Sports as a leisure activity on the subject. The population of the research consists of 100 (60 male and 40 female) students studying at Hitit University, Faculty of Sport Sciences and different departments. An electronic questionnaire consisting of two parts, prepared by

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the researchers, was used in data collection. In the first part, personal information and in the second part, a semi-structured form was used to determine the participant's views on E-Sports. In this study, quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used together. Closed-ended survey questions were analyzed in accordance with quantitative analysis, and answers given to open-ended survey questions were analyzed in accordance with qualitative analysis techniques. In the evaluation of the data, the opinions of the students were categorized by removing the codes from the answers given to the opinion form. In summary; it is expected that the e-sports awareness will be created in the society with the federation becoming active in Turkey and the support of universities gradually increasing. However, it is possible for students to evaluate e-sports both as a leisure time activity and to plan it as a career in the future.

Keywords: Leisure, E-sports, university students, qualitative research technique.

Introduction

In modern times, the e-sport games appear as a leisure activity. As a result of the reflection of individuality, one of the concepts that came with postmodernism, in the field of sports, people now want to be not only spectators but also players in sports. The virtual environment has also become a centre of attraction because it allows this individuality (Özsoy & Kalafat-Çat 2018).

Developments with globalization have increased the use of technological tools in all environment's day by day. This situation also affects the leisure activities of individuals. Many of the leisure activities appear as games-related activities and include sports games, card games, computer games, etc. games like these constitute most of these activities (Özgören-Şen & Öztek 2017). Due to the needs of our constantly changing age, individuals are introduced to technology from the beginning of childhood and this situation becomes an integral part of their lives. Due to many reasons such as urbanization, children have to grow up in concrete piles, unlike previous generations. With the new digital world, street games are now leaving their place to digital games. With the information technology, the forms of the game tools and equipment that children will play have changed. As the age gets older, a digital game culture has been formed with the habits that have been going on since childhood. Along with technological developments and modernization, the shape of sports has also changed and a new sport branch has emerged as electronic sports (E-Sports). Although e-sports, which can be defined as the modernization of sports, is a new sport that has emerged in recent years, it has an increasing momentum as a spectator and player.

For the other hand, the history of competitive video games in Europe and America began with the introduction of first-person shooting games (FPS) in the mid-1900s (Seo, 2013). In the game process, the entire role belongs to the player. It is possible to talk about two types of games, online and offline. According to Binark and Bayraktutan, (2011) the player's habitus in the digital game world determines the interaction and communication of the player with other players, and their transitions between the real world and the virtual world. With the characters they create, they create their personal showcases (Goffman, 2016) where they can display the better or desired aspects of themselves.

By his part, Wagner (2007) defines e-Sports as the field of sports activities where people train and develop their mental and physical abilities using information and communication technologies. Weiss (2011) also defines E-Sports as playing competitive games according to the rules accepted by the majority of leagues and tournaments. In other words, E-Sports can also be defined as a sport in which amateur or professional players compete as a team or individually in the computer environment (Gül et al., 2019). Just like in traditional sports, e-sports is in a period of development that continues to be accepted worldwide and is gaining popularity (Witkowski, Hutchins, & Carter, 2013). It has also managed to capture a position where federations for e-Sports are formed, grow, have an increasingly crowded audience, and even those who have never heard of it, have mastered the term in a very fast process (Tanrıöven-Yazıcı 2018).

E-sports continue to develop in Turkey. Officially affiliated with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Turkish E-Sports Federation (TESFED) was established in 2018 and became operational. Again, Turkey's first e-sports scholarship project was implemented in March 2017 and within the scope of this project, "Game industry and E-Sports" was included in the higher education curriculum for the first time in Turkey as an elective course (Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi, 2017). In the administrative context, E-Sports have taken its place in the sports market. However, E-Sports is followed more than traditional sports competitions, its income stream is quite high, its audience is very wide and it has come a long way in the institutionalization stages (Bergeron, 2006). Especially the generation called Z generation prefers e-sports as a leisure activity (Güler, 2019). Our study was carried out in order to learn the opinions of university students about E-Sports. The purpose of this research is to determine some demographic variables of e-sports players and their level of knowledge about e-sports. In addition; The aim of this study is

to investigate the underlying reasons why e-sports, which is very popular in the world, has not yet reached the desired levels in our country, in line with the opinions of the athletes, and to reveal the obstacles faced by the participants and what kind of situations cause these obstacles.

Methodology

Model of the research

The research was carried out using qualitative research techniques to determine the views of university students on E-Sports. This research is exploratory research aiming to reveal the knowledge levels of individuals playing e-sports, the obstacles they encounter, and the real reasons behind these obstacles. Qualitative research method was used in this study because it can reveal the real reasons, beliefs, values and emotions underlying human behaviour better than quantitative methods.

Participants and data collection tools

The participants of the research; It consists of 100 students who study in various departments of Hitit University (faculty of sports sciences and other departments) and have previous knowledge and experience about the concept of E-Sports. In the collection of data; a questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions developed by the researchers was used. The questionnaire form consists of two parts. In the first part, there is the information and consent form about the research, then the questions to determine the demographic information of the participants, and in the second part, there is a student opinion form consisting of semi-structured questions in order to determine the opinions of the students about e-sports.

The data were obtained by delivering the data collection tool to the participants online (online) via Google Form. The people who filled out the questionnaires filled out the consent form and each question (each question with a mandatory mark). Forms that do not comply with this condition were excluded from the evaluation.

A questionnaire consisting of closed and open-ended questions was prepared by the researchers to be used as a data collection tool. While preparing the questionnaire, simple and short sentences were used so that it could be understood by people from all socio-cultural levels. This questionnaire was presented to the opinions of three experts in

the field. The qualitative dimension of the research consists of the explanations written by the participants to the open-ended survey questions.

The descriptive analysis approach (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005) was used in qualitative analysis. All answers to open-ended questions were first completely transcribed. The data were analyzed and described in a classified sense within the framework of the categories created according to the answers given by the participants. These data, which have become simpler, have been visualized with tables. In the quantitative analysis, the number of opinions was obtained in the percentage qualitative analysis. All these quantitative and qualitative findings obtained were blended and presented in a way to answer the research questions.

Qualitative research questions

Q1: Could you briefly describe e-Sports?

Q2: What do you think are the features that an e-Sports player should have?

Q3: In your opinion, what is the image of young people playing E-Sports in the eyes of other young people?

Q4: Which country do you think will lead the way in e-Sports 10 years from now?

Q5: What do you think are the reasons why E-Sports cannot develop in Turkey?

Validity-reliability

Guba (1981) proposes the reliability criterion in qualitative research against the reliability criterion of positivism. The reliability criterion states that the findings and interpretations of the research are the product of a consistent process. In addition, since the qualitative researcher is the data collection tool himself, the burden of objectivity is loaded on the produced data. At this point, it is possible to say that impartiality in qualitative research is ensured by the confirmability of the data produced. A model for explaining the causes of social phenomena was proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). According to this model, relations with an order and succession can be established between social phenomena, which can be grounded and unite stable social facts. These relationships are called "transcendent realism".

The analysis made according to this model includes three basic stages designed as organizing or reducing the data, displaying the data, describing and verifying the results

(Macdonald & Tipton, 1996; Wooffitt, 1996; Creswell, 2003; Baltacı, 2017). This similarity, called internal consistency in the Miles and Huberman model and conceptualized as consensus among encoders, can be calculated using the formula $\Delta = C \div (C + \partial) \times 100$. In the formula, Δ: Reliability coefficient, C: Number of subjects/terms on which consensus is reached, ∂: Number of subjects/terms on which there is no consensus. According to the coding control, which gives internal consistency, the consensus among coders is expected to be at least 80% (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002).

Analysis of data

In order to determine the level of clarity of the questions and to give the final shape to the data collection tool before the questionnaire was applied to the subjects, a preliminary test was conducted with the students in the internet cafes where e-sports are played, and the opinions of the experts in the field were consulted. In the light of the data obtained through the preliminary experiment, the parts that were found to be faulty were corrected and made ready for application.

Content analysis technique was used in the analysis of the data obtained from the opinions of university students on E-Sports. The students' opinions were categorized by removing the codes from the answers given by the students to the semi-structured opinion form. For the reliability of the research, the agreement rate between the coders was determined as 85.1%. The data obtained from the demographic information section of the questionnaire were calculated as frequency and percentage. Since the number of participants is 100 people, the percentages given will also indicate the frequency rate.

Results

In this study, 60% of the students participating in the research were male and 40% were female. 60% of the students are between 18-22 years and 40% of them are 23 years and over. Looking at the section read, 55% is related to sports and 45% consists of different sections. In this part, the tables of the students were examined in two parts. The first part is descriptive information part and the second part is reserved to evaluate the

views of the students qualitatively. The views in the qualitative part will be discussed together with the discussion.

Table 1
Students' descriptive information about E-Sports

Does anyone around you play e-sports?	%
Yes	39.0
No	61.0
Does your family support you to play e-sports?	**%**
Yes	40.0
No	60.0
How does e-sports affect your academic success at university?	**%**
Positive	14.0
Negative	21.0
Neutral	65.0
Do you spend money on e-sports?	**%**
Yes	20.0
No	80.0
Do you earn from e-sports?	**%**
Yes	15.0
No	85.0
Do you think e-sports has a future in the future?	**%**
Yes	73.0
No	27.0
Do you plan to choose e-sports as a career in the future?	**%**
Yes	27.0
No	73.0
Total	**100.0**

Table 2
Students' views on the definition of e-sports

Sub Categories	Number of views
Fun online or offline game	38
Playing some console games as a team or individually for points	24
Internet sport/game	22
Virtual games/sports tournament played in environments such as computers and the internet.	16
I don't know	13
Sports branch based on online games	8
Sports played by university or city teams in the digital environment	6
Mobile game	4

Table 3
Students' opinions on the characteristics that should be found in e-sports players

Sub Categories	Number of views
No special skills required	41
Hand and eye dexterity	23
Quick game Reflexes	19
Game information	17
Attention and ingenuity	13

Table 4
Students' views on the images of young people playing e-sports from the eyes of other young people

Sub Categories	Number of views
Doesn't have an image	38
Asocial	32
Computer/game addict	18
Clever	15
Person who wastes time	9
A successful/good image	9
Beautiful/cool	8

Table 5
Students' opinions on e-sports country rankings

Sub Categories	Number of views
ADB	24
Turkey	20
South Korea	19
Republic of China	15
No idea	8
Japan	7
Italy	3
Russia	3
Britain	1

Table 6

Students' opinions on the insufficient development of e-sports in Turkey

Sub Categories	Number of views
People don't know about E-Sports	59
Not considered a sport	57
Young people's future concerns	48
Lack of environment	45
Sponsor	37
Not being open to innovation and technology	33
Prices of gaming computers	33
Education system	28
Not having a 240hz monitor	14
It is sufficiently developed in Turkey.	14
We live in a conservative society	12

Discussion

Looking at the literature, it is seen that e-sports has become a phenomenon that mostly appeals to the young age group. It is stated that an average E-Sports player is between the ages of 15 and 25 and trains 3-4 times a week (Muller-Lietzkow 2006). In a study conducted by Civan-Kemiksiz (2019), it is noteworthy that the LoL game with a sample of 1375 people is played more often under the age of 25, and the rate of participants over the age of 25 is low. Studies have shown that male players are more addicted to playing games than female players (Yılmaz, 2020). In studies on the motivations of players for eSports, the frequent emphasis on the fun factor (McCree, 2009) may explain why the answer to fun online or offline games is in the first place in our research. Yılmaz and Yılmaz (2019) research results show that students experience conceptual confusion about the concept of E-Sports.

The fact that there are few e-sports players in our country may be the reason why students do not come across e-sports players around them. Regarding the support status of their families, more than half of the students state that their families do not support them to play e-sports. It is possible to state that e-sports has an intellectual aspect such as chess, as well as similarity with traditional sports branches that require quickness (Menteş, 2009). In a study, the Faculty of Sport Sciences Students especially; It is understood that he finds it beneficial in terms of contributing to the development of motor skills, being able to be used as a motivation and leisure time tool, developing strategy development and quick decision-making, providing hand-eye coordination, improving

imagination, contributing to mental development, and improving fast thinking skills (Yılmaz & Yılmaz 2019).

According to the information about the characterization of young people playing e-sports as asocial in the eyes of other young people, those who played digital games before the sports period were interpreted as asocial, but now they are not socializing. It has become one of the most important tools used (Bergeron, 2006). Therefore, e-sports, which has been popular in Asian countries for years and to which Western countries have only recently been included, continues on its way with an ever-increasing momentum in the world (Ocak, 2020). It is seen that the International E-Sports Federation has been organizing tournaments on a global scale since 2009, South Korea is one of the most successful countries in these tournaments, the organizations are mainly held in Asian countries, and the variety of games in the organized tournaments is diversified with the addition of new games as the years increase (Kartal, 2020).

According to the statements of the American Medical Association, the majority of American youth (90%) play digital games (Şenses, 2020). It is seen that the majority of the students do not spend money on E-Sports and the majority of them do not earn from e-sports. Although a large part of the students think that e-sports has a future, they stated that they will not choose e-sports as a profession in the future. In a study conducted by Demir (2018) with 117 e-sports players, 78.6% of the participants stated that they see e-sports as a profession. Large amounts of prizes obtained from professional tournaments or items such as in-game money, weapons and clothes obtained in amateur races constitute one of the important sources of motivation for players. 57.3% of e-Sports players earn income from the games they play, while 42.7% do not earn any income (Yılmaz, 2020).

In the study conducted by Sarı and Harta (2019) on the e-sports behaviours of high school and university students, it is seen that 48% of the participants do not spend any money on online games. According to this, it is seen that more than half of the online players participating in the survey spend. In our study, it is thought that university students do e-sports within the scope of leisure activities, so whether they earn or not spend money with high amounts. It is also known that there are scientific studies in which there are discussions about whether it is possible to see e-sports as a kind of sport

(Martončik 2015). The main reason for these discussions is the view that electronic athletes do not compete with any physical activity.

For the other hand, in e-sports, there are matches/competitions just like in traditional sports. With this aspect, E-Sports also has a tricky aspect such as strategy, tactics, team motivation, an e-athlete's ability to perform 400 movements per minute using the keyboard and mouse, although it is controversial, in terms of physical ability, production of cortisol at the level of a car racer in a competition, and a similarity to a marathon racer's heartbeat. It has been suggested as an indicator of physical performance in e-sports (Yükçü & Kaplanoğlu 2018, Banyai et al. 2018). By his part, Coakley (1980) mentions that games are activities based on competitive, interpersonal management skills. Suits (2007) stated that the essence of sports is games and mentioned that there are very small differences between games and sports. When we look at e-sports organizations and games, we see that they meet almost all of these criteria.

E-Sports has become an industry that grows exponentially every year. In order for Turkey with its potential population to compete with the world in the field of e-sports, the level of knowledge about e-sports should be determined and studies should be carried out to increase the level of knowledge. When we look at the results, it is seen that e-sports is not known enough despite the potential young population in Turkey and the study was also carried out on the students of the Faculty of Sport Sciences. Informative and supervisory studies about e-sports should be carried out in order for our country to have a say with its potential young population in the e-sports sector, which has reached gigantic proportions all over the world, and to use its beneficial aspects (Çolak et al. 2019). In our study, it is a thought-provoking situation that they stated the third place as future anxiety.

The limitation of the study stems from the fact that the findings of the study were generalized only to the research sample with the sample selected in the study. In our study, Hitit University students, who follow the official page of Hitit University's e-sport club and are also e-sports players, were selected as a sample. Therefore, the results of the research can be generalized to all Hitit University students who play e-sports. However, it should be noted that the research findings cannot be generalized to these students, since students who follow the page and study at different universities are not included in the scope of the research.

Conclusion

The reason why sports activities are one of the most interesting areas among leisure activities can be shown that sports are fun and can be performed by all ages and all genders (Karaküçük, 1999). The fact that the young generation can access the internet at a young age causes individuals to spend their spare time unusually. Turkey's youth population ratio is higher than that of 28 European Union member countries and the internet usage rate is 93.0% (95.0% for young men; 91.0% for young women) in the 16-24 age groups. Although (TÜİK, 2019), it is known to follow the e-sports field quite behind.

In the introduction part of our study, we stated that e-sports is included as a course in some universities. If this situation becomes widespread, certified training programs can be prepared at a level that will be useful to the young generations in the future, accompanied by an experienced staff. We believe that the teaching of these courses, especially in the recreation and sports management departments within the faculty of sports sciences, will pave the way for training officers such as certified players, referees, shoutcasters, organizers, coaches and managers, instead of increasing the number of licensed players together with infrastructure works and clubs.

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