ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to study frequencies of playing live and digital games, and to test for gender differences, to identify the most frequently played games, and to explore association between well-being indicators and frequency of playing. We found low positive association between frequency of playing of live and digital games. Most frequently played live games were various card games, and Shooter games were most frequent among digital games. Male participants played more frequently both live and digital games. Male participants played more action and simulation computer games, while female participants preferred puzzles and card games. Internet addiction was positively correlated to the amount of time spent logged on to the internet, and higher levels of loneliness and depression. Participants who played live games more reported lower levels of depression. Participants who played digital games more, spent more time logged to the internet, reported higher levels of internet addiction, but lower levels of depression.
INTRODUCTION

In Croatian, as well as in some other languages (e.g. French, German, Estonian), game and play are described by the same word. However, play is much wider concept, usually very loosely defined through various voluntary amusing activities, while game denotes a voluntary imaginary competition governed by the rules. Besides traditional games such as card and board games, and sport variety, last few decades are marked by the expansion of digital games. Digital games are played using electronic devices, either online or stand-alone (Osman, 2018). Both digital and traditional (real-world) games can be played with/against other players or alone, against computer (digital games) or oneself (live games).

Internet addiction is often associated or even equalised with playing computer games. Actually, gaming is older than the Internet, and still many digital games do not require the Internet. From the first arcade games developed in the 1970s, video game industry by the end of 20th century evolved from specialized market to mainstream multi-billion-dollar industry. But, we must bear in mind that games existed long before computer era, actually long before human race evolved. Indeed, some physical playing behaviour was observed among reptiles and amphibians (Power, 2000), and we have all witnessed genuine playfulness of kittens or puppies. Although play behaviour is most vivid in young animals and although there is a common belief that games serve as practice for real life challenges, many animals, including humans, show playfulness in adulthood also.

In this chapter, our (author's) aim was to find out which types of games and with whom people play in traditional, live setting, and which games they play by using computer. Furthermore, we (authors) opt to compare frequencies of playing computer supported and live games and to explore its relation to well-being indices. The introductory section describes concept of games, both live and computer supported and theorize about role of games in human lives and their association to well-being. This leads to aims of the current study, followed by description of research methodology, study results’ presentation and finally discussion and recommendations for further studies.

BACKGROUND

Van Leeuwen and Westwood (2008, pp 153) state that: “According to the PsychINFO database, in the last 10 years more than 3000 psychological research articles written in English focused on child play, yet only 40 addressed play in adults or the elderly and this was mainly in therapeutic contexts.” So, we know very little about how, why and what games adults play, and if there is any association between overall well-being and play in adults.

Whitebread (2012) refers to five types of play in children: physical play (e.g. chasing), play with objects (e.g. construction), symbolic play (e.g. playing with words, sounds, drawing), pretence/sociodramatic play (role playing) and games with rules (e.g. sports, card games, video games).

Although it is known that need for play is not exclusive for young age (van Leeuwen & Westwood, 2008, Sutton-Smith, 2009), and that adults also enjoy play as a type of leisure activity, only in the recent years scholars started to give more attention to adult play and its functions. One of the major concepts studied in this area is playfulness: the personality trait associated with playing behaviour and willingness to engage in play. In various studies playfulness has been found to be associated with positive outcomes. For example, Magnuson and Barnett (2013) found that playfulness is associated with positive coping.
Related Content

Case Study Analysis of a Behavior Intervention Service Delivery Model With Autism Spectrum Disorder Students
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/case-study-analysis-of-a-behavior-intervention-service-delivery-model-with-autism-spectrum-disorder-students/189337?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/case-study-analysis-of-a-behavior-intervention-service-delivery-model-with-autism-spectrum-disorder-students/189337?camid=4v1a)

Graceful Ageing: Exergaming as a Means to Delay Mental and Physical Decline among the Elderly
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/graceful-ageing/129267?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/graceful-ageing/129267?camid=4v1a)

Counseling Refugees
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/counseling-refugees/214142?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/counseling-refugees/214142?camid=4v1a)

Presentation of Research Findings
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/presentation-of-research-findings/216533?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/presentation-of-research-findings/216533?camid=4v1a)