

Violent digital games: The interaction of gamers' traits and game characteristics

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Digital games become a common hobby and violent content function as an attracting factor of these games. Research literature regarding violent digital games presents two approaches that lead to contradictory conclusions. The General Aggression Model - GAM holds that the consumption of violent digital games increases violent behavior and arouse negative inclinations of the players, while the Catharsis Theory emphasizes the positive side -purgation of negative emotion in the online game, which will reduce violent behavior offline. The purpose of this study is to examine both the positive implications of using digital games such as increasing the belonging to a group game and increasing the number of members of the game network and the negative effects of these games, such as compulsive playing. These effects could be a function of the player's features (players with high versus low baseline of aggression) as well as violent digital game's characteristics such as a game strategy (cooperative game versus competitive game) and the mode of interaction between gamers (inter-personal versus group interactions). The study combines quantitative and qualitative methodology. Two hundred seventeen Israeli gamers aged 18+ men and women completed a self-report online questionnaire distributed via social network "Facebook" during May-July 2013. Quantitative analysis is currently performed. After this, observations and semi-structured interviews with 16 participants will be conducted. The findings can provide comprehensive explanations of positive and negative effects produced by violent digital games on players' behavior and discuss the attractiveness of violent games in terms of the GAM and the Catharsis Theory.