

IC - (21044) - GAMERS' EXPERIENCES OF GAMING ENVIRONMENTS – BASED ON INTERVIEWS

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Background and objectives

The aim of our qualitative study was to explore and describe how the environment of gaming activity is interpreted and experienced by gamers during playing tabletop and video games.

Process and methods (for empirical research)

The idea of an interview study was formulated in consultation with some members of several Central and Southern European gamer subcultures, which could provide a more accurate, life-like, reliable picture of the context of the gaming environment. In our exploratory research, a semi-structured set of questions was developed in three overlapping pilot phases which resulted in 29 segments of questions. 130 interviews were conducted, because of the pandemic, partially in an online form. A part of our questions aimed at a wide context of gaming situation (e.g., gamer identity), whereas other items were specifically intended to reveal environmental settings of gaming activity.

Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

According to the results, the game environment could mean both the design, i.e., the visual world of the games and the gaming situation, i.e., the socio-physical context of gaming activity. It was difficult to interpret these at a conscious level, however, experiences about the environment of gaming activity emerged even in the answers to non-environment-specific questions. In the case of both, their intimate characteristics and the unambiguous rules were emphasized by the respondents. The essential excitement of the video gaming activity is largely associated with the duality of the gaming environment which should be at the same time complex and unpredictable providing the opportunity for exploring and personalization.

Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

The investigation of gamers' relationship with their game environment can be helpfully applied in the gamification-based planning processes (e.g., public place planning). The consideration of the need for the complexity and duality of the environment can be crucial in the success of the gamification methods which are also applicable in the influencing of pro-environmental behavior.

Palavras-chave : game-environment, gamification-based planning, environmental psychology