

Gaming Habits and Emotional Responses in Adolescents

Hrishant Sahoo

South Forsyth High School, Cumming, Georgia, USA

Abstract

This study looks at the relationship between video game habits and self-reported feelings of anger and aggression among teenagers. A total of 85 students from grades 9 through 12 took part in an anonymous online survey. The survey asked about how much time they spend playing video games, what types of games they play, and how they feel during and after playing. Most participants said they play video games often, and shooter and fast paced games were some of the most common. Many students also said they notice changes in mood after playing, such as feeling more irritated or sometimes more aggressive. Since the data is based on self-reports, the results do not show cause and effect. Instead, they show patterns in how teens think gaming affects their emotions.

Keywords: video games, teenagers, aggression, mood, gaming habits, self report

1. Introduction

Video games are one of the most popular activities for teenagers today. With online gaming and competitive games becoming more common, people have started to question whether video games affect mood and behavior. One topic that comes up a lot is whether violent or fast paced games lead to more aggression.

Research on this topic does not fully agree. Some studies suggest that violent games may lead to short term increases in aggressive thoughts or feelings, while other studies do not find strong long term effects. Because of this, it is still important to look at what teenagers themselves report about their experiences. This study focuses on self reported responses from teenagers to understand how video game habits relate to feelings like anger and frustration.

2. Methods

Participants

The study included 85 teenagers ranging from age 14 or younger to 18 and older. Students were in grades 9 through 12. All responses were anonymous and participation was voluntary.

Materials

A Google Forms survey was used to collect data. The survey included multiple choice questions and rating scale questions from 1 to 5. It asked about gaming time, types of games played, emotional reactions during and after gaming, and feelings of anger or aggression.

3. Procedure

Participants filled out the survey on their own. They answered questions about weekly gaming hours, types of games they play, how often they play shooter games, how they feel after gaming, and how much they agree with statements about anger and frustration.

4. Results

Gaming Habits

Most students said they play video games regularly. More than half said they play shooter or fast paced games often. Gaming time varied, but many students said they play between 3 and 11 hours per week, and some said they play more than 12 hours per week.

Emotional Effects of Gaming

Most participants said video games affect their mood in some way. About two thirds said the effect is moderate or strong. After playing, some students said they feel calmer or unchanged, while others said they feel irritated, energized, or more aggressive.

Views on Violent Games

Most participants said violent video games affect aggression in some way. Around two thirds said they believe violent games slightly or strongly increase aggression. A smaller group said violent games reduce stress or have no effect.

Self Reported Aggression

Many students selected higher ratings when answering questions about anger and frustration. A lot of participants said they get annoyed easily, feel frustrated, or sometimes act aggressively when upset. More than half of the responses were in the higher range on several aggression related questions.

5. Discussion

The results show a possible connection between video game habits and how teenagers say they feel emotionally. Most participants play video games regularly, and many play shooter or fast paced games. A lot of students also said that gaming affects their mood.

Many participants believe violent video games may increase aggression. However, this does not prove that games cause these feelings. Since the data is based on self reports, it is not possible to know cause and effect. It is also possible that people who are already more competitive or easily frustrated are more likely to play certain types of games.

There are some limitations in this study. All answers were self reported, so people might not be completely accurate or honest. The sample was also not fully random, so it may not represent all teenagers. Also, the study measures opinions and feelings, not actual behavior.

Future studies could improve this by tracking people over time or observing behavior directly instead of only using surveys. It may also help to compare different age groups or levels of gaming.

Even with these limits, the study gives insight into how teenagers think gaming affects their emotions.

6. Conclusion

This study looked at video game habits and self reported anger in teenagers. The results show that gaming is very common and that many students feel it affects their mood. While there seems to be a connection between gaming and emotional responses, there is no proof that one causes the other. More detailed research would be needed to understand this better.

References

1. Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, B. J. (2001). Effects of violent video games on aggressive behavior, aggressive cognition, aggressive affect, physiological arousal, and prosocial behavior: A meta-analytic review of the scientific literature. *Psychological Science*, 12(5), 353–359.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9280.00366>
2. Dill, K. E., & Dill, J. C. (1998). Video game violence: A review of the empirical literature. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1359178997000013>
3. Ferguson, C. J., Rueda, S. M., Cruz, A. M., Ferguson, D. E., Fritz, S., & Smith, S. M. (2008). Violent video games and aggression: Causal relationship or byproduct of family violence and intrinsic violence motivation? *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0093854807311719>
4. Prescott, A. T., Sargent, J. D., & Hull, J. G. (2018). Metaanalysis of the relationship between violent video game play and physical aggression over time. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.
<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.1611617114>