Will Combat and Shooting Video Games Affect People’s Personality

戰鬥與射擊型電動遊戲是否會影響人的性格

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中文摘要

由於現今社會科技越來越發達，因此越來越多的人們傾向於藉由電動遊戲來紓解各自的壓力。隨著電動遊戲越來越發達，我們發現越來越多的犯罪者似乎都出現因為暴力的射擊類型或動作類型電動遊戲，而導致性格劇烈改變的現象。這些犯罪者狂暴與無情的表現，讓我們十分好奇，暴力類型的電動遊戲是否真的會塑造或是改變一個人的性格。因此，我們想要探討暴力電動遊戲與一個人的性格，是否有所關聯。

在這個探討暴力電動遊戲與一個人的性格的報告中，我們會查詢資料，以了解研究這方面議題的專家的看法。但是為了證實暴力電動遊戲與一個人的性格的關聯，我們也會發出問卷，並且用以觀察同學或朋友這方面的傾向。

而根據我們的調查結果，暴力的射擊類型或動作類型電動遊戲與一個人性格的改變或塑造，其實並沒有那麼大的相關性。也因此這證實了，暴力的射擊類型或動作類型電動遊戲，其實並不會讓一個人變得狂暴或是無情。這些有在玩暴力的射擊類型或動作類型電動遊戲的人們，或許我們這些普通人們一樣，都是十分友善而溫和的。

關鍵字：
暴力的射擊類型或動作類型電動遊戲
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暴力電動遊戲與個人性格的關聯
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Abstract

As technology becomes more and more advanced, people had started to look for ways to express their stress by playing video games. However, we have come to see that many of the aggressive and ruthless criminals in our society had the tendency of playing violent video games involving the types of combat and shooting. Therefore, we came up with the question whether the playing of violent video games may come to affect one’s personality.

In this project, we will come by the study of scholars and associative research about the issue. Also, to prove whether violent video games may affect one’s personality, we will also send out questionnaires, so we can come to observe the tendency of those who did the questionnaire.

And as a result, we found out that the interviewees of the questionnaire did not show very much of negative tendencies. Therefore according to the statistics, violent video games, especially of those involving combat and shooting, may not lure one into the personality of being ruthless or aggressive, since the two had no direct association. Those who play violent video games may not be dangerous as we came to see with our prejudice, they may be kind and nice as ordinary citizens.

Keyword:
Aggressive and ruthless personality
The association between violent video games and one’s personality
Violent video games
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Introduction

As technology becomes more and more advanced and easy to access, a large number of people turn to online video games to release stress. According to Entertainment Software Association, the video games’ sales in the US has grown from $2.6 billion in 1996 to $15.4 billion, in 2013 in revenue. (“GAMES: IMPROVING THE ECONOMY”) Also, there are a number of famous YouTubers who would share their experiences of playing video games on YouTube which attracts millions of watchers liking their videos. Take PewDiePie for example, he is one of the most famous YouTubers around the world, whose channel is mainly about sharing his video gaming experience. He has over 37 million YouTube subscribers and has over 9 billion views. These facts shows that people are really interested in video gaming nowadays.

In 2011, Norway’s mass murderer, Ander Behring Breivik, once said that he not only is a big World of Warcraft (video game) player, but he also used “Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2” (video game) to train for the massacre (“Norway mass-shooting trial reopens debate on violent video games”). According an article written by Jason Pan, a staff writer in the Taipei Times, in 2014, the mass killer of the terrifying attack happened in Taipei’s MRT, Cheng Chieh, was reported in the Taipei Times as a fan of combat video games. (“RAIL RAMPAGE: Suspect a loner, fan of combat games”).

One of the top 10 controversial violent video games “Mortal Kombat(1992)” has been viral for ages after its debut. (“10 most controversial violent video games”) The games features realistic graphics and controls. One has to defeat his or her enemy with a "Fatality," a move which kills your opponent in a very graphic fashion. Common "Fatalities" include burning opponents alive, cutting their heads off, and even ripping out their spinal cord using the skull. The scenes are considered brutal and bloody. Nevertheless, the gore has helped it to become one of the most popular video games of all time. All these events struck us with a question: do violent really video games alter people’s personality? Will it make people become aggressive or cold-blooded?

As a result, we want to know more and find out whether there is a link between video games, especially violent video games, and people’s personality because video games has such a great influence on modern society. According to a report done by Alice Park, a staff writer in TIME, indicates:

In the latest work to address the question, published in the journal JAMA
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*Pediatrics*, scientists led by Craig Anderson, director of the center for the study of violence at Iowa State University, found hints that violent video games may set kids up to react in more hostile and violent ways. ("Little By Little, Violent Video Games Make Us More Aggressive")

Also Dominick points out that video games compared with TV is a more active experience which involves intense concentration and physical activity. ("Video games, Television Violence, and Aggression in Teenagers"). Playing video games can be view as one of the main reasons of the influence people’s aggression.

To specify how the violence content in video games actually affects people, an experiment was done by Dr. Vincent Matthews and his colleagues at Indiana University. They divided their participants into two groups: one who play non-violent game for a week and those who played violent video games for a week. They used MRI to scan their participants’ brain before and after their one-week gaming. The results showed that the brain became less active in the areas that involved emotions, attention and inhibition of our impulses for those who played the violent games. ("How Playing Violent Video Games May Change the Brain")

Through these research, we see that great exposure of violent video games may lead to the result of changes in one’s brain, making one more ruthless and violent.

However, there are some sources indicating that the violence content in the video games wouldn’t cause change in people’s aggressiveness. According to Christopher Ferguson, chair of the psychology department at Stetson University, there isn’t really much of association of violent tendency with the exposure of violent video games since the rise in popularity of video gaming has not been matched by a similar rise in violent crime among adolescents who are most likely to play them. ("Little By Little, Violent Video Games Make Us More Aggressive")

In addition, Brad Bushman, a communication and psychology professor at Ohio State University states: “You cannot predict a shooting rampage just based on exposure to violent media or any other single factor …violent acts are rare and caused by a culmination of a dangerous and unpredictable interweaving of factors.” ("Violent Video Games Alter A Child's Behavior; 8 Out Of 10 Experts Agree Media Is A Recipe For Aggression")

Moreover, a study done by Ward MR. revealed a negative correlation between an increase in the sale of video games and criminality. Besides, another research done by
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Ward MR., Cunningham S and their colleagues showed that whenever the sales of violent video games grows for a 1% increase, the incidence of crime decreased by 0.03%. (Fournis, Gaël and Abou, Nidal Nabhan "Violence, Crime, and Violent Video Games: Is There a Correlation?") The statistic obviously conclude that human’s personality wouldn’t be influence by violent video games. Otherwise, the crime rate should go up as the sales of the video games rise.

However, due to the vicious violence that exist in our society, most of the ruthless criminals seemed to have large exposure with violent video games, as investigations showed. The great exposures of the video games may really have something to do with this kind of criminals, who acted ruthless and savagely while they kill or harm people.

Therefore, we designed our questionnaire, trying to find out whether playing combat and shooting type of video games or online games will influence people’s personality to a darker side which later on might cause the violence in our society.

Body

Technique(s) you adopt: we analyze the answer we got on our questionnaires. Combine different statistics and make new graphs

Method

As a result, we distributed our surveys to ask people about their feelings toward players. If they happen to be a player themselves we ask them whether they have discovered any potential changes after the day they started playing violent online games. Also, we base the terms of personalities on the graph below (picture 1).
Results
Our statistics of questionnaire containing genders of interviewees including players and non-players, age of interviewees, how long players have been playing games, time spent on games per week, reasons of playing games, reasons of not playing games, feelings during playing games, feelings after playing games, personalities players think they have, personalities players’ friends think players have, personalities people think players have and some advanced statistics extended from some of statistics mentioned above.

There are a total of 75 participants involved in this study, 50 males and 25 females. Among them there are 49 players (40 males and 9 females). In other words there are 10 males and 16 females are non-players.
As shown in Figure 1, there are 2 interviewees between 15-18 year-old, 68
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interviewees are between 18-22 year-old, 5 interviewees are over 22 year-old. To figure out the range of our participants’ age, we divided our range of age by education degree into senior high school (15-18 years old), university (18-22 years old), and those who have graduated from university. As seen in figure 2, most of the participants are university students.

![Figure 1: Most of the interviewees are university students](image)

From figure 2, we know that most of our participants have played combat and shooting video games for more than one year. There are equally 11 players who played only for half to a year and under half year.

![Figure 2: How long players have been playing games](image)

As shown in Figure 3, 39 interviewees spend under 7 hours on games per week, 9 interviewees spend 7-14 hours on games per week, 1 interviewee spends above 28 hours on games per week.
Figure 3: Time spent per week on games

As shown in Figure 4, 1 player plays games because of curiosity, 2 players play games because they want to try, 2 players play games because they search satisfaction, 2 players play games just for fun, 5 players play games to kill time, 6 players play games to search exciting feeling, 7 players play games to relief stress, 12 players play games because of others’ influence (including siblings, classmates or relatives’ encouragement) 7 players play games for no particular reason, 1 player plays games for other reason.

Figure 4: Reasons of playing games

As shown in Figure 5, 8 non-players think games waste time, 21 non-players are not interested, 5 non-players think games are too difficult, 2 non-players think games make people hot tempered. (This statistic includes the non-players who played games
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once.)

Figure 5: Reasons of why not to play games

Figure 6: Feelings during playing games

Figure 7: Feeling after playing games
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From figure 6 and 7, we notice that while and after playing combat and shooting video games, people mostly feel happy, satisfied and excited. These emotions are all positive, which have less chance to alter a person’s personality into a negative one.

As shown in Figure 8, 34 players think they are friendly, 11 players think they are mild, 24 players think they are easygoing, 10 players think they are talkative, 4 players think they are decent, 15 players think they are optimistic, 5 players think they are cheerful, 13 players think they are emotional, 2 players think they are irritable, 3 players think they are cynical.

As shown in Figure 9, 31 friends think players are friendly, 14 friends think players are mild, 29 friends think players are easygoing, 5 friends think players are talkative, 2 friends think players are decent, 15 friends think players are optimistic, 13 friends think players are cheerful, 7 friends think players are emotional, 1 friend thinks players are irritable, 3 friends think players are indifferent, 2 friends think players are narcissistic.

Figure 8: Personalities players think they have

Figure 9: Personalities friends think players have
As shown in Figure 10, 34 people think players are friendly, 13 people think players are mild, 38 people think players are easygoing, 13 people think players are talkative, 0 persons thinks players are decent, 12 people think players are optimistic, 11 friends think players are cheerful, 13 people think players are emotional, 1 persons thinks players are irritable, 2 people think players are cynical, 2 people think players are narcissistic. (This statistic may include the opinions from players to their friend who also play games.)
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As shown in Figure 11, in players’ opinions, 26 players are friendly, 13 players are mild, 20 players are easygoing, 8 players are talkative, 6 players are decent, 13 players are optimistic, 5 players are cheerful, 12 players are emotional, 3 players are irritable, 3 players are cynical, 2 players are indifferent, 1 player is narcissistic and 0 player is arrogant. In friends’ view, 25 players are friendly, 9 players are mild, 25 players are easygoing, 5 players are talkative, 3 players are decent, 13 players are optimistic, 11 players are cheerful, 9 players are emotional, 3 players are irritable, 0 players is cynical, 3 players are indifferent, 2 player is narcissistic and 0 player is arrogant.

![Figure 11](image)

Figure 11: Differences between players’ own opinions and friend’s opinions on personalities (Under 7 hours)

As shown in figure 12, in players’ opinions, 7 players are friendly, 3 players are mild, 3 players are easygoing, 3 players are talkative, 0 player is decent, 4 players are optimistic, 0 player is cheerful, 3 players are emotional, 3 players are irritable, 2 players are cynical, 2 players are indifferent, 0 player is narcissistic and 0 player is arrogant. In friends’ view, 6 players are friendly, 5 players are mild, 4 players are easygoing, 1 player is talkative, 0 player is decent, 2 players are optimistic, 2 players are cheerful, 3 players are emotional, 3 players are irritable, 0 player is cynical, 0 player is indifferent, 2 players are narcissistic and 0 player is arrogant.
Both figures (11 and 12) show that there is no big difference between players’ own opinions and friend’s opinions on players’ personalities. Surprisingly, the friends’ opinion on the players, shown in figure 12, reveals that the friends have comparatively more positive feeling towards the players’ personality than the players’ themselves.

In order to know whether spending more time on violent video games affects one’s personalities, we combine Figure 11 and Figure 12 together, creating Figure 13. To our surprise, there is no big difference in people’s opinion towards the personality of those who spend under 7 hours per week on the games and those who play 7~14 hours per week. It appears that both categories of gamers are considered friendly. It gives us the result that time spent on violent video games doesn’t affect one’s personality.
Conclusion

In the beginning, we make our hypothesis that playing violent (combat and shooting) video games may have influence on people’s personality. However, the result of our survey shows that most people think of their video game-player friends as friendly and easy-going. Secondly, most gamers feel happy and satisfied (positive emotion) during the process of playing and after playing the games. Moreover, the result reveals that the more time one spent on combat and shooting video games doesn’t make one’s personality more negative. It is proper to say that people don’t need to exaggerate the problem of video games containing violence. The violence is merely an element for people to relief stress. Therefore, when encountering a person who likes to play combat and shooting video games, don’t judge their personality too quickly. They can be just as nice as you and me.
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