



Exploring youth Esports behaviours to understand health benefits and potential for harm



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Introduction

From early basic titles such as Tennis for Two (1958), video games have progressed into online competitions, hosted on multi-national servers for millions of concurrent players (Bányai et al., 2019). Across the past three decades, the latter have facilitated Esports, whereby players engage in organised competitive video game play using computers, consoles, or mobile devices. Though involvement in these competitions is often recreational, for a minority of elite players, the proliferation of Esports has allowed for professional careers in gaming (Jonasson & Thiborg, 2010). The Esports market is growing; however, research on the impacts of this on professional and amateur competitors is nascent. Through exploratory research, three semi-structured focus groups were conducted with high school youth in Aotearoa New Zealand, to explore health benefits and harms of participating in Esports. This report first outlines a background for the research, noting the key literature gaps, before describing the methods undertaken for this project. The results of the focus groups are then presented through five themes, and the key implications of these are noted.

Background

Esports exist at the intersection of video games and competitive sports (Lin & Zhao, 2020). Hemphill (2005) first identified the reproduction of sports-like qualities in online spaces through Esports; players compete, and a degree of physical co-ordination and stamina is often required to participate. If video gaming is considered to be equivalent to playing a physical sport, Esports participation is the equivalent to being a sporting athlete, and this can be in a professional or casual capacity (Jonasson & Thiborg, 2010). For professional players, Esports competitions are commercial pursuits with an expectation of elite-level performance, sold-out stadia for live viewing, and venture capital-like investment (Holden et al., 2018). Casual players compete in smaller tournaments and, if they seek to become professionals, must form a team to attract the attention of professional Esports organisations and sponsors (Adams et al., 2019).

Few studies have identified rates of engagement in Esports, and even fewer have considered how these vary between demographic groups. Furthermore, associated benefits and harms of participation are not well understood, as is true of the growing convergence between online gaming and gambling (such as through the inclusion of loot boxes and other microtransactions in video games), despite the additional financial harms this might expose young players to (Kolandai-Matchett & Abbott, 2022). However, in Aotearoa New Zealand, under the Gambling Act 2003, games including free-to-play games (F2P), which are commonly played in Esports, are not recognised as gambling.



These games are, therefore, not subject to the same advertising and implementation restrictions that apply to traditional gambling products.

Due to constant developments in the Esports market, globally, regulation has failed to keep pace with this gaming-gambling convergence (Harvey, 2007; Lin & Zhao, 2020). According to Martinelli (2018), the Esports landscape is crowded with governing bodies, each claiming to regulate the industry. However, these groups are often independent from each other, and not government backed. Regulations are, therefore, generally poorly aligned, and governance is often unable to respond quickly, or in an appropriate manner, to address arising issues (Peng et al., 2020). This is true in Aotearoa New Zealand, where Esports participation is becoming increasingly popular amongst young people (Brand et al., 2023).

Accordingly, this exploratory study sought to provide preliminary evidence regarding young peoples' Esports participation, and any benefits and harms pertaining to this, to better inform the healthy provision of Esports in Aotearoa New Zealand. To achieve this, the aims of the study were to understand:

- The context and popularity of gaming and Esports for high school students aged 14 to 17 years.
- The benefits or harms of gaming and Esports.
- The convergence between gaming and gambling behaviours (e.g. monetary microtransactions in video games, purchasing loot boxes, and betting on Esports matches).

It is hoped that the findings from this study will provide preliminary evidence useful to high schools and organisations that provide Esports opportunities to students, in the most effective methods to provide Esports in a safe and healthy manner.

Methods

Ethical approval for this study was granted by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 17 July 2024 (reference no. 24/163). Three, in-person, semi-structured focus groups were conducted in Christchurch with students from three high schools. The principal from each school gave permission for students in their schools to be invited to participate in the research. A participant information sheet and a flyer inviting participation was emailed to relevant teachers at each school who distributed these to Esports playing students in Years 9 to 12. Students who wished to participate contacted the research team through email or via their teacher. Each student signed a consent form before participating.



Twenty-seven students took part across the three focus groups, which were held at Upper Riccarton Library and Sport Canterbury Healthy Families Ōtautahi. Students were encouraged to give their opinions, based on their own thoughts and experiences of playing Esports. Students were recognised for their time and knowledge through the gifting of a \$30 PB Tech store voucher.

Data were analysed using Thematic Analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017). The data were coded, and patterns and common themes were identified from these. This allowed flexibility to capture what was important to participants, and, to identify issues that were previously unknown to the researchers. The following section first overviews the demographic characteristics of participants, and the extent of their involvement in Esports, before then describing the five major themes that were developed from the data.

Results

Of the 27 participants, 25 were male, and two were female. Thirteen participants were Year 9 high school students, five were Year 10 students, seven were Year 11 students, and two were Year 12 students. Students were asked to identify the games they played regularly, whether this was specifically for Esports, or more generally for leisure or other purposes. Some mentioned more than one game and some students did not respond. Table 1 charts all games that were mentioned, and the number of times a participant said they played them. Please note that regarding Call of Duty, the specific version played from the long-running series is unknown.

Table 1: *Games played by participants*

Game	Number of participants
Valorant	19
Fortnite	6
Rocket League	4
Call of Duty	2
Roblox	2
Dead by Daylight	1
League of Legends	1
Apex Legends	1

Some students had been participating in Esports for up to 10 years, although most had been playing for 18 months, or fewer. All participants participated in Esports through in-person tournaments, online (through competitive tournaments with friends, or online tournaments with others), or both. According to those who had started participating within the previous year, their involvement began due to their school or local library



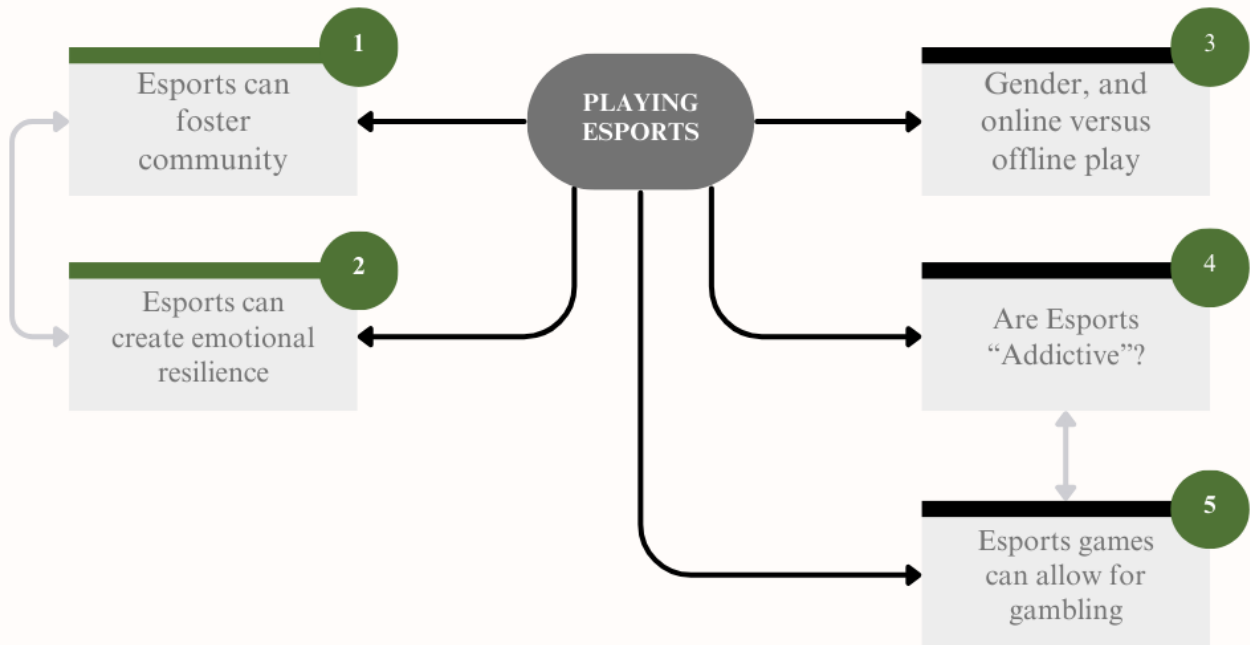
recently facilitating Esports participation. One participant noted that before this, they were unable to be involved due to not having access to the necessary equipment at home (such as a high-end mouse or keyboard). Those who could not access Esports venues (or afford the required equipment) were limited in their ability to be involved in Esports. According to one participant:

Um, for my friend... He'd never played Valorant before. I took him to the library to play, because he wanted to try it, and he absolutely loved it. But the reason he can't get into Esports and things is just [because] his school doesn't supply it, and also, he just can't afford a computer or anything at home. He has a PlayStation... With League of Legends and Rocket League, the main Esports games in New Zealand, he can't play those. (*Male, Year 10*)

Due to difficulties in accessing the necessary equipment, participants acknowledged that, despite an apparent intent, several of their friends were unable to be involved with Esports. Participants also noted an additional barrier to prospective players, that of high-skill requirements in certain games, and player-bases which can be confrontational. One participant recounted an incident where they left their friend alone to play an online game (that they were new to), before coming back, checking the game, and seeing that other players had “told him to go to the files and delete the game... And you know what? He's never been back”. The high, average skill level in online Esports games was described by participants as sometimes creating an unwelcoming environment for new players.

However, despite these described barriers to involvement, several key benefits and concerns relating to Esports were identified through the three focus groups, as participants recounted their own playing experiences. The following subsections describe these through five themes. Figure 1 depicts these themes; those on the right represent potential issues relating to Esports participation, and those on the left represent potential benefits. Some of these are interrelated; for example, participants who described Esports as “addictive” (explored in Theme Four), were also making in-game microtransactions (explored in Theme Five).

Figure 1: *The benefits and harms of playing Esports: Five themes*



Theme One: Esports can foster community

Several participants said that playing Esports helped them to make friends and be involved with a community. One who had recently become involved, had done so because their friends already played Esports. Various other participants played Esports “because it’s fun to play with the others”, “to meet new people”, and because “you can make some online friends across the globe”. One participant noted that through playing Esports, they have “made a crap tonne of friends”, and another mentioned their parents’ approval of their Esports involvement, as it provides some “sort of social interaction, because if I didn’t [play Esports], I would [have] completely no social interactions”. Esports also afforded participants who could not play physical sports an opportunity to be involved with something which was competitive and involved socialising with others.

A few of us weren’t able to play physical sports... I had a medical issue which couldn’t allow me to play sports for a while, so I wanted to still be a part of something, you know? Join a team. And then, I found Esports, and I was like, oh this sounds fun. I tried it out and I’ve been enjoying it. It’s been helping me. It’s sort of like a sports team; everyone’s together, they’re having fun, and you’re learning something. And yeah. It opens a new doorway to those who can’t play physical sports. *(Male, Year 11)*



This opportunity to play with others was described as a key component of the appeal of Esports by another participant. They said, “if I play [Esports] alone, I just get burnt out”. Several participants described a camaraderie that had developed between them and their friends through playing Esports together; they each cited the stress and minor antagonisms associated with competitive play as helping to develop social bonds. According to one, closeness was developed, in part, as they were “playing with each other, yelling at each other... getting angry with each other”. The mutual experience of competitive in-game scenarios was said to reinforce a connectedness between players on the same Esports team.

Theme Two: Esports can create emotional resilience

Despite varied opinions on whether playing Esports was stressful, those for whom it was stressful generally reported that the stress positively shaped their emotional resilience, and their ability to cope with stressors outside of gaming. Those who argued Esports participation reduced their stress attributed this to being able to “scream for no reason [when frustrated by gameplay]”, thereby releasing frustration, and being able to play with friends. However, one participant noted that “there is so much pressure” to not be “the worst player” in competitive play. Across the three focus groups, two participants mentioned damaging their gaming peripherals (in this case, a monitor and a mouse, respectively) due to frustration while playing.

Despite this, there was a consensus that Esports-related stress was generally “fun stress”, or at least, different from “the stresses of schoolwork and home” in a way which helped them to manage these. According to one participant, even “if you aren’t doing too well [within the game]”, the stress presents an opportunity to “learn how to manage your emotions”.

When it comes to schoolwork, the stress was like, it’s sort of a mental thing. But then the stress of playing games, of playing Valorant, it’s more like a fun sort of stress, it’s enjoyable. And sometimes yes, you’ll get really angry, but it’s all in good fun, and yeah, everyone’s having a laugh. They’re enjoying themselves. And yeah, the stress is, I think, way better than the stress from the schoolwork overall... I think the stress from playing Valorant does actually help the stress from schoolwork. (*Male, Year 9*)

Multiple participants in that focus group agreed. According to a participant in another focus group, “it’s the stress that teaches you how to work together as a team and improves your problem solving”. Another said that “when you’re under stress [that is not related to gaming], it’s really hard to think. And if you can improve on that, then you automatically get better at the game and in real life”. One participant described their Esports involvement as “a mental support”, which most of their group agreed with. Though it could be stressful, participants generally agreed that this stress could be productive (in learning how to manage stress from elsewhere) and was at least a reprieve from the stresses of schoolwork and home life.



Theme Three: Gender, and online versus in-person play

Two of the 27 participants were female. One, who had only recently begun playing Esports, reported initial reservations about becoming involved. She said, “at first, it was hard to bond, because I didn’t know any of them, and I didn’t have any friends who were girls who were playing Esports”. Despite these concerns, she recalled that after getting involved with regular, in-person Esports events, “I actually enjoyed it. I loved it more, because they’re all crazy”. A male participant added that they did not treat the female player any differently at these events; he said, “we’re all people who just want to play games, and that’s all”.

However, participants discussed why other prospective female Esports players might be dissuaded from playing, particularly in an online setting. They said that when playing Esports online, female players may encounter people saying, “sexist things” through in-game communication mechanisms, which can lead to them being “afraid to talk”. One male participant also added that “since you’re behind a screen, you’re anonymous. The toxicity is very rampant”.

Critically though, comparing the online space with in-person Esports gaming opportunities, a male participant reflected that the “good thing about having an in-person space [where participants met regularly to play Esports together] like this, is everyone’s a lot more respectful and playful whereas... if we’re anonymous...” this may not be the case. Describing the dynamic of in-person play, one participant remarked the following:

Let’s say [name of a male participant] did something. Usually, people would just go and insult. You know? Like, you’re bad and stuff, they’d be yelling at them. Sometimes, they might give advice, but they’re mostly being very aggressive. For instance, if [name of the female participant] did something wrong, people would... if they instantly heard that voice, they’d be respectful. I’ve noticed that a lot.”
(Male, Year 11)

The female participant agreed, saying that she had not experienced any disrespectful (or gendered) language while being involved with Esports in-person. According to participants’ comments, facilitating in-person Esports participation may create a less confrontational space for prospective female players to become involved, with a reduced risk of experiencing sexism. It is important to note, however, that this is based on the involvement of only two female participants. Further research is needed to determine whether these findings generalise to the broader female Esports player population.

Theme Four: Are Esports “addictive”?

Despite participants reporting a variety of weekly playing time (from “3 hours a week”, to “19 hours” on the weekends), several described Esports participation as “addictive”. Though there was no discussion regarding what constituted ‘addictive’ (or an ‘addiction’



to Esports gaming), one participant noted that when they needed to “study for an upcoming exam, then it’s really hard to get off the game”. In one focus group, a participant said that they gamed “without doing chores” and “haven’t cleaned [their] room in a month”. However, this was mostly poorly received by the others in the group, with one responding, “this is the definition of no-life everybody”.

In one focus group, though one participant claimed to spend an average of eight to nine hours gaming per day, most of the others only played twice per week, as they were facilitated to do so by their school organising an Esports playing group. Though the former participant reported their sleep being affected due to the time they spent gaming (and reported that they gamed on their Chromebook while at school), the others, particularly those who could not access gaming hardware at home, did not. Participants’ playing time was generally limited by the availability of adequate gaming hardware.

I have a really crappy laptop, so I can’t play at home. After school on Wednesdays is the only time I can actually play video games. I do have a PlayStation, but that’s the only time I can play PC games. If I want to play games on my PlayStation, that’s in the middle of my house, it’s a family console, so I’m still interacting with my family. *(Male, Year 9)*

Conversely, those who could only game at regularly scheduled school events, or under the supervision of parents, did not report their gaming affected their sleep. One participant noted that their playing time was limited due to having to meet certain in-person obligations:

When I first come home, I need to take an hour break and then go shower. And then I usually eat dinner first, because I don’t want to be called into dinner while playing a game such as Valorant, because I’ll get banned. So, that’s why I play after dinner, which only leaves me with two, three hours. I play at 6pm or 5pm and then end at 8. Or sometimes, 1 hour, because I go outside with my friends to the park. *(Male, Year 9)*

As eating dinner would interrupt their gaming session (which cannot generally be paused when playing online with other players), this could lead to them being banned from the game due to being away from their computer. Therefore, this limited the amount of time this participant could spend playing Esports. Ensuring they met various obligations thus meant that their gaming time was managed. Generally, participants reported meeting other obligations before spending time playing Esports.

Theme Five: Esports games can allow for gambling

All participants who reported that playing Esports affected their sleep, or their ability to meet other commitments, also made in-game microtransactions. However, though the frequency and average price of their purchases were generally higher than amongst the others, making such purchases was not exclusive to this group. Most participants were



aware of microtransaction opportunities in the games that they played, and the majority had purchased loot boxes, at some point. When discussing loot boxes as an example of a microtransaction, though some participants disagreed, most described these as gambling, or gambling-like opportunities. As more obvious examples of gambling, several participants also described others' (not participating in the focus groups) 'skin¹ betting', which involves the wagering of virtual, in-game cosmetic items ('skins') to bet on gaming outcomes, and themselves betting on the outcomes of others' Esports competitions. This section first examines participants' microtransaction-purchasing behaviours, and the extent to which these microtransactions emulate more traditional forms of gambling, before then considering the reported prevalence of skin and outcome betting in this sample of Esports players.

Two participants (out of 10) in the first focus group said they had made loot box purchases. One claimed to have spent more than \$1,000 on these in one session and made purchases "every month". The others said that all their purchases were made during the first "two to three months" of their Esports playing, but that they had since "decide[d] to get some self-control". In the second focus group, again, two participants (out of nine) reported making microtransactions; one had spent an estimated \$700 in Valorant, and another had spent more than \$1,000 across the previous six months. In the third focus group, however, four participants (out of eight) had made microtransactions, with two reporting they made weekly purchases (\$30 and \$10 each session, respectively), while of the remaining two, one made purchases only once a month, and the other made purchases "five times per year".

Of participants who had not made any microtransactions, two commented that they were not able to afford to do so, while the rest stated they had no interest in doing so. Of the latter group, many identified microtransactions (mostly, the purchasing of loot boxes) as gambling. In games frequently played by participants, loot boxes provided opportunities to receive skins for the cost of in-game currency (which itself was purchased through spending real money). Though varying character skins have generally been described as having little, or no, impact on gameplay outcomes (particularly by gaming companies to excuse the inclusion of loot boxes in their games) (Greer et al., 2023), several participants disputed this. Referring to different in-game dimensions of different skins, one participant said, "if you use a woman [avatar, that they implied would generally be small], it's going to give you small hit boxes [the areas which will register a 'hit' when a bullet is shot at it]". The implication of this, is that skins may provide players

¹ In video games, a skin is a graphic download (i.e. virtual item) that changes the appearance of characters. Skins are purely for aesthetic purposes and do not alter a character's abilities in the game. Nonetheless, players usually buy skins with real money, with some rare skins being quite valuable (in real money).



with a competitive advantage in future games and, therefore, have functional use, in at least some cases.

Sometimes, skins were randomly allocated to the purchaser after opening a loot box, most directly emulating gambling. As one participant described, “you buy one of these cases... it’s completely random... you get something [worth] 10, 20 times the amount you paid, or you can get something that’s worth nothing. So yeah, that I think people would find that addictive”. According to another, loot box spending “can induce some money spending problems and possible gambling problems”. One participant added:

There are a lot of gambling aspects in gaming. With gambling for different weapons and such ... you click it, and it’ll go ding a ling a ling a ling to get all the [dopamine] in your brain. And then it’s like, oh, I got a bad one. Oh, but maybe if I do it one more time... *(Male, Year 10)*

Though one participant acknowledged “there’s only a 0.1% chance” of receiving the item they wanted through a loot box purchase, multiple participants agreed with another who said that “there’s always just that one time where you accidentally let your gambling side get ahead of you”. However, participants also identified other microtransaction opportunities which, though they provided the purchaser with the option to select a particular skin, still introduced an element of chance, but less directly. According to one participant:

On Valorant, on each day, you can get four items in your shop. It’s pretty much luck based. You have to wait. Yesterday, and the day before yesterday, I got some skins that were \$35 each. *(Male, Year 9)*

Here, the participant described a scenario whereby though they could choose which skin to purchase (from four given options), the skins on offer changed randomly each day. Several participants corroborated this, with one adding that “there’s at least 1,000 skins in total”, but only “four skins available that you can get [on] that day”, and the game (in this case, Valorant) prompts players to buy through reminding them that “the deal goes away”, creating artificial urgency and artificial scarcity. This participant then described this as “predatory”. Though this is not a loot box in a typical sense, as players choose the item for their purchase, an element of chance is introduced (and scarcity tactics are employed) which creates another gambling-like scenario. As another participant said, “you really get FOMO [fear of missing out] if you don’t buy it, because it might take another year to come back”. Describing how this mechanism led to in-game expenditure, which they later regretted, one participant agreed:

I relate to that... I was waiting for [a particular skin] for around a year. On and off the game. I don’t even play that game, I just logged on to see if it was in the shop. And then once I got it, I don’t even think about it like I was spending money I just



bought it. I feel like, I mean I still use it, but I didn't need to buy it. You regret it after you buy it, you're like, okay I probably didn't need to buy it. (*Male, Year 9*)

One participant, reflecting on similar comments made in a different focus group said, "it's pretty bad, because it really influences young kids into bad spending habits later on, which can affect them later on in life". Several participants acknowledged that they had already spent "pocket money" on in-game purchases, with their parents being unaware of this. One of the older participants recounted that when they were "in Year 10 [they] didn't have a [debit] card yet", so had to "go to the mall" to buy League of Legends gift cards. However, now that they have their own debit card, "it's easier to spend large amounts".

Although several participants had heard of skin gambling, none reported participating in it themselves; one participant claimed to know "around two to three people who've done it" but was unsure how to engage in the process. However, several participants reported betting on the outcomes of others' Esports competitions. Across the three focus groups, two participants claimed to have wagered on Esports outcomes through a gambling website. One of these websites allegedly only allowed for betting with "fake money"; however, the other participant reported real money gambling, though they did not know whether they were using a website dedicated to betting on Esports or if they were using a more generic betting platform. Three participants reported betting in-person, with friends. One bet \$5 with a friend against an online Fortnite game outcome, another did not disclose how much they lost, whereas the third bet using their food for the day, saying, "because of gambling, I didn't even have enough food [after betting a sandwich] for the whole day. I had to eat nothing". Of these three, the student who bet \$5 said that they did not ultimately pay their friend the money, and the student who bet the sandwich said that they now would not use a gambling website to wager on Esports outcomes.

Discussion

Regular engagement in Esports has been associated in literature with several harms. According to Wattanapisit et al. (2020), adult players may incur repetitive strain injuries and occupational overuse syndrome, general physical injuries due to being distracted by the game, and seizures (if they have epilepsy). However, in a study of 38,935 online gamers' self-reported gaming behaviours, Vuorre et al. (2022) found that there was little evidence to substantiate such claims. They showed no causal relationship between game play and wellbeing, and argued that fears about games, and the policy decisions that follow these fears, are largely based on the ubiquity of the games, and inadequate supporting data. A study of 1,066 video game players conducted in Germany in 2019 found that most participants (95%) reported good to excellent health status, and two-thirds engaged in moderate to vigorous physical exercise for more than 2.5 hours each week. No relationship was found between video game playing and sedentary behaviour. About half of that study's participants reported engaging regularly in physical sports;



several had been involved in “national tournaments” for their respective sports (Rudolf et al., 2020).

Amongst young people, gaming has been associated with higher levels of creativity, and improved scores on cognitive tests (Jackson et al., 2012; Pujol et al., 2016). Participants in this study also reported that playing Esports positively shaped their emotional resilience and ability to cope with stress. Furthermore, despite a common association between gaming and difficulties socialising, several participants reported that Esports allowed them to participate in a community, and to be able to meet people they otherwise might not have met. This follows Barr’s (2019) claim, that online gaming can provide a digital bridge rather than a divide. The author linked gaming to improved communication skills, as well as to resourcefulness and adaptability.

Though gaming does not appear to be innately problematic, several studies have raised concerns about the convergence of online gaming and online gambling, particularly given the involvement of financially vulnerable young people. F2P games were played by all participants of this study and have been identified as targeting behavioural mechanisms which encourage wagering (Cassidy, 2013). While initially free to download, F2P games encourage monetary microtransactions so that players may purchase virtual goods (such as skins, new avatars, upgrades to an existing avatar, power-up or speed-up items, extensions, add-ons, or updates) (von Meduna et al., 2019). For example, one might opt to purchase a loot box, whereby money is spent to obtain a randomly selected virtual item. This process is analogous to a structured lucky dip (Drummond et al., 2020). According to this study’s participants, however, though some games offer players a set choice of items to choose from on a given day, vendors are covertly introducing chance and artificial scarcity, through randomising which set of items are made available. Several participants stated that they had made microtransactions while playing F2P games. Though most claimed to be spending irregularly, and with small amounts, in each focus group, two participants stated they had spent several hundred dollars on in-game microtransactions; these participants generally also reported gaming affecting their sleep, and their ability to meet various commitments.

According to Greer et al. (2023), engagement with Esports betting products may also encourage more traditional forms of gambling; individuals may then incur harms associated with gambling, as well as financial harms related to Esports betting. In this study, two participants claimed to have bet on Esports outcomes through a gambling website, and three other participants reported betting in-person, with friends. As interest in Esports events has grown, so have the numbers of gambling companies offering opportunities to wager on these events (Macey et al., 2021). These companies, including unregulated third-party websites, have exploited developing opportunities to provide



gambling products, whether in the form of betting on Esports event outcomes, or on skins (Greer et al., 2023). Though a greater number of participants made microtransactions than engaged in more traditional gambling related to Esports, it is important to note that nobody in this sample was older than 17 years and most were 14 years of age. This group is not necessarily representative of all Esports players (or all young Esports players), who may be more or less likely to access traditional gambling products.

Key Implications

This exploratory research has identified two key benefits, and two risks, for young people participating in Esports. For each identified risk, recommendations are provided for how it might be mitigated. These recommendations should be considered on the basis that this research was exploratory and further research with larger numbers of participants may identify different benefits and risks.

Benefits

1. Playing Esports appeared beneficial as it helped students to learn how to manage stress.
2. Esports participation allowed opportunities for students to meet new people and strengthen existing social bonds when playing with others.

Risks

1. A toxic, sexist culture (particularly online) might act as a barrier to female involvement in Esports.

Recommendation: Facilitation of in-person Esports events may encourage female engagement. These events also appear to support socialisation amongst all players.

2. Financial harms arise from gambling in F2P games via in-game purchases through loot boxes or less obvious gambling-like mechanisms in games. Spending large amounts of money on these in-game purchases can negatively affect sleep or ability to meet other life commitments.



Recommendations:

Young people's caregivers, and those who facilitate Esports events, should:

- a) Be aware of gambling mechanisms embedded in video games, and how they might financially harm young Esports players.
- b) Be aware of *how* Esports players are making gaming-related purchases (e.g. using debit cards), and to manage the expenditure, if necessary.
- c) Recommend to young Esports players that they do not save their debit/credit card details on gaming sites, to slow down decision making when considering purchasing in-game items.



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