Rage in video gaming, characteristics of loss of control among gamers: A qualitative study

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Abstract

Introduction: Online forums devoted to video games dedicate discussions to a phenomenon named “rage” that produces difficulties for gamers. Rage is described as expressing violent and impulsive reactions through excessive frustration or bad faith while gaming. The description of “rage” is close to the description of “tilt” in the context of online poker. The aim of this qualitative study was to describe rage as it occurs in online video games and to identify its etiology and consequences.

Method: A qualitative study included 24 gamers aged between 18 and 30 years old. Semi-directive interviews were conducted and participants completed an online survey. Two researchers rated each interview using the thematic analysis method, and reported an agreement rate of 83%.

Results: Rage was described by gamers as a change in the manner of playing caused by a feeling of frustration during the game. Rage has components that are behavioral (aggressive behaviors), cognitive (poor decision-making) and emotional (anger). Rage can be contagious among gamers and may result in the loss of the game and a “rage quit”, in other words an abrupt cessation of the game.

Discussion: Rage is a phenomenon of loss of control that occurs while playing an online video game. It has similar characteristics to tilt in online poker. However, the outcomes of tilt and rage are different and might lead to opposite relations with addiction behaviors.

INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, video games have become increasingly included in our everyday life through various technologies (game consoles, laptops, smartphones, or tablets). In the USA, video games are used in 67% of homes; about 60% of video gamers are under 35 years old and 40% of gamers are female (Entertainment Software Association, 2017). In this age group, gamers mostly play on computers (Entertainment Software Association, 2017; Hakim, Landrieu & Danard, 2014). In France, 73% of the population plays video games and 49% of them play online (Hakim et al., 2014). Despite the massive use of video games in our societies, few studies have focused on gamers' behaviors and experiences during gaming (Kuss & Griffiths, 2012).

As video games are heterogeneous, they can be grouped by types according to their characteristics. Among the games most played on computers, three different categories can be identified. Firstly, the Multiplayers Online Battle Arena games (MOBA) (i.e. League Of Legends) (Entertainment Software Association, 2017; Hakim et al., 2014; Kuss & Griffiths, 2012) are team games in which players, personified by a hero, fight in an arena (Bonny, Castaneda, & Swanson, 2016). The Massively Multiplayer Online Playing Games (MMORPG) (i.e. World Of Warcraft) are adventure and multiplayer games that take place in permanent worlds where gamers are personified by an avatar. They interact and cooperate with their team and compete with other teams (Beranuy, Carbonell, & Griffiths, 2013). Finally, the First-Person Shooter (FPS) (i.e. Counter Strike) is a category of action, shooting and mostly multiplayer games in which players look at the scene through the eye of the game's character (Metcalf & Pammer, 2013).

Most of the players have a recreational use of video games, but some individuals may develop excessive use (of over 30 hours a week) or an addictive behavior with consequences on health (Rehbein, Psych, Kleimann, Mediasci, & Mößle, 2010; Porter, Starcevic, Berle, & Fenech, 2010; Batthyány, Müller, Benker, & Wölfling, 2009; American Psychiatric

Association, 2013). There is currently a debate on gaming disorder, the DSM-5 does not include it as a disorder, whereas the World Health Organization (WHO), in the ICD-11, does recognize it as such (American Psychiatric Association et al., 2015; World Health Assembly, 2018). A gaming disorder is characterized by impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming, and the continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences and functioning impairments over a 12-month period (World Health Assembly, 2018). Gaming disorder risk factors have been identified; some are related to the structure of the game and others to the gamer's vulnerability (Caplan, Williams, & Yee, 2009; Kim, Namkoong, Ku, & Kim, 2008; Kuss, Griffiths, Karila, & Billieux, 2014; Kuss & Griffiths, 2012; Rehbein et al. 2010). Thus, playing online and playing MMORPG, having a strong desire to improve gaming skills, having a powerful identification with the avatar, or a low self-esteem, are considered to increase the risk of developing a gaming disorder or excessive use of video games (Kuss et al., 2014; Romo et al., 2012).

An observation of forums dedicated to online video games found that players often mention a particular experience that causes difficulties, named "rage" or "tilt". Rage is defined by players as expressing violent and impulsive reactions through excessive frustration or bad faith while gaming. Rage appears to cause a change in the gamer's behavior, a loss of control over behavior and emotion, and a loss or a cessation of the game named "rage-quit" (Przybylski, Deci, Rigby, & Ryan, 2014). "Tilt" is an expression derived from the poker gaming vocabulary. It describes a change in the way the individual plays. The player is no longer able to take rational decisions because they are overwhelmed by emotions and frustration (Browne, 1989; Moreau, Delieuvin, Chabrol, & Chauchard, 2017; Moreau, Delieuvin, Chauchard, & Chabrol, 2015). This experience is well-known among poker players for leading to a drop in emotion regulation abilities, to high impulsivity, aggressive behaviors, increased irrational beliefs, loss of control over the game and, in most cases, financial loss (Moreau et al., 2015). Tilt shares many

characteristics with the pathological behaviors of a gambler, excepting that it is transitory and experienced by most skilled poker players (Moreau et al., 2017). In this article, in order to differentiate the two phenomena, we will use “rage” in the context of video games and “tilt” in the context of poker.

Based on the descriptions identified on the forum, rage in video games is experienced by most regular gamers, as is tilt in poker (Browne, 1989; Moreau et al., 2017, 2015). To our knowledge, there have been no studies describing video game rage, and the reasons for and the consequences of rage in video games have not been identified. The first aim of this exploratory study was to define those episodes of behavioral loss of control, to identify their characteristics and to collect the cognitive, behavioral and emotional data from the gamer's experience. The second aim was to identify the strategies implemented by gamers to regulate those episodes. Finally, we aimed to compare tilt in poker and rage in video games in order to understand if they are similar or different concepts.

Method

Participants

To participate, gamers had to be aged between 18 to 35 years old and had to be online gamers on computers, as well as MMORPG, FPS or MOBA players, for at least one hour a week. Twenty-four interviews were conducted. Most of the participants were male (n=20) and two played online poker.

Measures

Semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured interview guide was created in order to collect data on the experience of raging, including its behavioral, cognitive, emotional and environmental characteristics. It

was based on the semi-structured interview guide used in the qualitative research on online poker tilt (Moreau et al., 2015). Next, investigators asked questions on the perceived differences between video game raging and online poker tilt (appendix 1).

Thematic analysis

In order to analyze the interviews, we used a thematic analysis procedure; four Master's students participated in the analyses. First, each individual student carried out a preliminary thematic analysis of three interviews. Secondly, they pooled the matrix they had made after the preliminary thematic analyzes to combine the themes identified by each assessor and build the rating matrix together. Thirdly, the four investigators rated the same interview individually using the rating matrix to verify and adjust the evaluations. Lastly, the thematic analyzes of the 24 interviews were performed; two students worked on the evaluations of each interview, and each of them rated 12 interviews. The inter-rater reliability was verified and showed a good agreement rate, as 83% of the occurrences were classified identically by the two pairs of students.

Online questionnaire

The participants completed an online questionnaire which included sociodemographic and video-game use questions, as well as the short version of the Game Addiction Scale (GAS) (Lemmens, Valkenburg, & Peter, 2009). The GAS evaluates video game addiction with seven items measuring strength, tolerance, humor modifications, relapse, avoidance, conflict and problems that the subject experiences in relation to gaming. Participants indicated the frequency of the behaviors described on a five-point Likert scale (from 1 "never" to 5 "very often"). The scores ranged between 7 to 35, and Cronbach's α was $\approx .82$. Use is considered as problematic when participants obtain a score of above 3 (sometimes) for at least four items (Lemmens, 2009).

Procedure

The data was collected between December 2016 and March 2017. We called for participants by displaying the study announcement on online social networks and in various places or events (Toulouse Game Show, stores, University). The individuals interested in participating contacted the research team by email to agree on an appointment. We asked them to complete an informed consent form online. For convenience reasons, the interviews were made by an investigator using Skype. After the interview, the participant was emailed the link to complete the online questionnaire. A unique code was given to the participant to link the interview and the questionnaire anonymously. The investigator was available by chat during the time the participants completed the online questionnaire.

Results

Descriptive statistics

The sample was mostly male and the average age was 22 years old ($SD=3.3$). 12% ($n=3$) played once a day; 45% ($n=11$) played several times a day. The duration of the gaming sessions was mostly longer than two hours (75%, $n=18$). The problematic use of video games involved 66.5% ($n=16$) of the participants. Descriptive data of the sample was presented in table 1.

Description of the rage phenomenon

All of the participants ($N=24$) indicated experiencing changes in behavior during video gaming. The terms most commonly used to describe this phenomenon are “rage” ($N=24$) and “tilt” ($N=14$). These episodes seem to impact the gamers on an emotional, cognitive and behavioral level. This phenomenon is generally described as temporary loss of control of playing behavior, linked to anger and to frustration:

“It’s a loss of control, in the heat of the moment, that leads to loss of self-control, which is linked to certain events in the game, to a lack of skill, etc.”; “Raging is more like getting angry with the other people, being more negative and sometimes even leaving in the middle of a game

round”; “I’ll get angry at my PC, I’ll probably shout out insults (laughs). Erm, shout a lot, even. Then again, I’m not personally the type to throw my controller around, well, maybe a bit in fact.”; “The name speaks for itself, raging is really when you blow a fuse. It’s when you can’t control yourself anymore and you start insulting everything around you”; “It’s more like a loss of control. We get a bit carried away and we just start swearing, whereas in real life we wouldn’t”; “Basically, raging is a passing, temporary state, it doesn’t last”.

Emotional level

Two major emotions were identified in the participants’ speeches. Firstly 79% of the players (N=19, 44 occurrences, i.e. 2.6% of the total occurrences) experience anger, irritation or nervousness during episodes of rage.

“Basically it bubbles up, I mean I can feel it growing, and after a while it feels like I’ll explode, I’ll really get angry”; “it all depends on the situation, but it really is deep irritation”; “It’s being in the heat of excessive anger, and leads to loss of self-control”.

Secondly, the presence of frustration is noted in 54% of the players (N=13, 44 occurrences, i.e. 2.6% of total occurrences), for example, *“it’s frustrating”, “I feel very frustrated”, “it’s going to frustrate me”, “it’s a cocktail in the end, frustration, irritation, excitement...”*.

A little under half of the players also describe negative emotions such as guilt or disappointment (N=13, 38 occurrences, i.e. 2% of total occurrences), *“It can go really far in terms of emotions when I’m raging, I get to the point where I don’t want to do anything, I’m disorientated and annoyed with myself”*.

Cognitive level

92% of the players (N=22, 84 occurrences, i.e. 5% of total occurrences) express cognitive difficulties.

The players describe concentration difficulties: *“When I rage, I’m actually less concentrated*

on the game.”; “I have trouble thinking”; “I play without paying much attention”; “I’m not thinking about what I want to do”; “Firstly, I can’t concentrate anymore”.

The players also describe more impulsivity in their decision-making: *“You don’t really think about the consequences of these actions straight away”; “well, basically I just don’t think! Because I’m spontaneous”.*

Meanwhile, they describe the presence of external attributions, which manifest in blaming the mistake on others: *“we’re going to blame it (the mistake) on our teammates”; “we hold them (the other players) a little responsible”; “we’re not as kind or lucid”; “I’m moaning at the game in fact”.*

21% of the players (N=5, 13 occurrences, i.e. 0.8% of total occurrences, describe dissociative phenomena, such as: *“I’m in another state, in which time goes by faster”; “what we say isn’t really relevant to what is actually happening in the game round”.*

One player describes a vicious circle: *“To know we’re raging and that we can’t control it makes us rage even more than what had happened before, in fact. It’s a vicious circle that can send you into a spin, uh... yeah, it can really make us blow up”.*

Behavioral level

Regarding behavior, all the participants (N=24, 216 occurrences, i.e. 12.9% of total occurrences) mention behavioral manifestations, essentially of aggressiveness. *“I speak a little more loudly, and once or twice I’ve hit my desk but that happens very rarely”; “I’ll hit my desk, hit my keyboard, hit the mouse, hit the screen, insult all the players... you know (laughter)”; “I start insulting people and, like, knocking the mouse about, I sit back down, it’s true that I can move the mouse abruptly, bang my fist on the table, that kind of thing, but it doesn’t go far.”; “It can create nervous trembling, a way of acting that highlights aggressiveness in terms of behavior, something that really gives off anger, you can be really agitated, move, and in terms of the tone of voice too”.*

Verbal aggressiveness is noted for 88% of our participants (N=21, 127 occurrences, i.e. 7.6% of total occurrences). They thus start to *“insult other people”*; *“let go verbally”*, *“I let off steam, I say what I need to say, insults”*; *“using strong swear words in a spontaneous way”*.

Physical aggressiveness is present 63% of the players (N=15, 28 occurrences, i.e. 1.7% of total occurrences) and manifests through violence towards pieces of furniture: *“Sometimes I might hit or punch the bed”*; *“throwing my controller”*; *“hitting the desk”*; *“for example, throwing objects on the floor. Like knocking a bottle of water that's beside you, and running the risk of damaging your equipment”*.

Furthermore, 50% of the players (N=12, 63 occurrences, i.e. 4% of total occurrences) can experience a feeling of loss of control: *“I'm spontaneous. Whenever I think something, I say it, cash, and I don't think of the consequences it can have”*; *“you just can't control yourself anymore”*; *“you don't control the situation anymore”*.

However, 50% of our participants (N=12, 47 occurrences, i.e. 2.8% of total occurrences) add that this phenomenon is a transitory state: *“it doesn't last”*; *“it's not necessarily long”* or even *“it's temporary”*.

Causes

All the participants (N=24) evoke external factors to explain the triggering of this phenomenon. Two major causes can be noted in their descriptions. 83% of them (N=20, 133 occurrences, i.e. 7.9% of total occurrences) describe that rage may be caused by interactions with other players: *“when others start to insult you”*; *“when the guy in front of you says 'easy', well, that just drives you crazy”*; *“Generally, you don't rage when you're alone. You get angry, you'll want to go further in the game, but you won't rage like a guy can make you rage, you know”*; *“when I play with other people, when the person has a bad attitude, well, I mean when they do badly what they're supposed to do, when they don't follow the logic of the game”*.

Another cause of rage is experiencing failure, for 88% of the players (N=21, 106 occurrences,

i.e. 6.3% of total occurrences), when *“we lose many times in a row”*; *“when we lose”*; *“the fact of losing”*; *“a dude that kills me several times in a row”*; *“when we lose many times in a row”*; *“when I lose my ranking”*; *“repeated situations of failure”*; *“when you just get killed continuously”*.

Finally, 67% (N=16) of the players link the competitive aspect of video games with the emergence of a rage episode, and describe a greater presence of the phenomenon in *“competitive games”*, when you *“measure yourself against the other”*, and the call for a *“competitive spirit”*; *“even if you’re here to play, all of this is still a match so it’s a competition”*; *“people with a very, very competitive spirit mostly. But then I think that everybody is prone to raging if you want to win”*.

Two older participants (28 and 24 years old) also noted an effect of the player’s age. These gamers explain that in their view, young players are not only a cause of rage, because of their provocative behavior, but are also more likely to experience these episodes of loss of control. *“Generally, the kids, those are the ones who are good. They have more reflexes, they’re quick, but at the same time, they don’t have the maturity to calm down; ‘Those who are between 14 and 18 years old, generally those are the ones who fire off comments (aggressive ones) and it’s going to piss you off. At the same time, if they lose, they’ll blow up faster”*.

Consequences

For 63% of the players (N=15, 40 occurrences, i.e. 2.4% of total occurrences), rage leads to the loss of the game round. *“The round will finish faster and generally, it will end in a defeat”*; *“my level of gaming worsens”*; *“it’s going to affect the way they play, and they won’t play as well and I’m not as likely to win”*; *“If you’re too submerged by rage, yes, you’re going to play any old how, and because of that you’re going to lose”*; *“so that makes you lose the round or even the game”*.

Furthermore, 63% of the players (N=15, 28 occurrences, i.e. 1.7% of total occurrences) explain

that rage can have a contagious effect on the other players : *“the others also start to get angry and to rage, and then it’s over”*; *“it spreads”*; *“it’ll infect the others”*; *“it can really destroy the game and its atmosphere”*; *“when we get into this rage and the others share it and infect the others, and then everybody is angry”*; *“you can sense the atmosphere, even the players on your team change their way of playing, actually, you can sense it in the movements and the way they play”*; *“in gaming (online), the problem is that it’s basically going to infect the others. It can really spoil the game and its atmosphere, because if everybody is swearing or being sworn at”*; *“the team’s cohesion is challenged, there’s no longer any cohesion at all in my view...”*.

A loss of pleasure in playing or a loss of interest for the game is described by 66% of the players (N=16, 73 occurrences, i.e. 4% of total occurrences). *“I don’t feel like playing anymore, and I don’t enjoy it anymore”*; *“Either I don’t want to play at all anymore, or I stop playing, or I continue playing but I don’t really want to continue”*; *“It’ll also impact my enjoyment, I’ll enjoy playing less, you just want to win (...). Actually, you want it to end fast and to move on (laughter)”*.

Moreover, a positive and liberating effect of these rage episodes is described by 42% of the players (N=10, 36 occurrences, i.e. 1.9% of total occurrences). *“In the heat of the moment, it clearly did me good. Clearly”*; *“It’s more like an outlet, where everything is allowed basically, and so I’m not going to contain my rage, but offload, for example after a crap week. I’ll offload and it’ll do me good in fact”*.

Rage regulation

In order to cope with this phenomenon of rage, the players describe establishing regulation strategies such as changing activities or rationalization.

Changing activities is used by 79% of the players (N=19, 72 occurrences, i.e. 4.3% of total occurrences), for example: *“I watch a movie or I read a book”*; *“I go and get some fresh air”*; *“Either I do something else, I smoke a cigarette, or I just take a break, I go and eat something”*.

71% of the players (N=17, 49 occurrences, i.e. 2.9% of total occurrences) try to rationalize their anger. This is conveyed in statements such as: *“I manage to tell myself that it’s just a game”*; *“there’s no reason to get angry for something like that, there are more important things in life”*; *“I know how to get some distance on this, I know it’s a game and that even if I lose it’s not the end of the world”*; *“Telling yourself that even if you have objectives in the game, just telling yourself that it’s only a game round”*; *“I imagine him (the opponent) as someone inferior to me, to reassure myself in a way”*.

Lastly, we note that social support may have a role in the regulation of the phenomenon of rage, for 58% of the players (N=14, 40 occurrences, i.e. 2.4% of total occurrences) indicate that *“playing with friends, that helps”*; *“we lose control more easily alone than with friends”*; *“you rage more when you’re alone (in the room)”*; *“Well, it’s the people who are next to me, like my parents, who say ‘shut up, stop shouting’ (laughter)”*. *Because personally, I don’t realize it”*.

A majority of the players also described a type of behavior that seems to be closely associated to rage, actually named “rage-quit”. *“I rag- quit, that means I leave the game. Then, I turn off the computer directly and I go and relax”*; *“Sometimes I can leave the game directly”*; *“Instead of getting angry and insulting the player, I just turned the game off as so not to smash everything”*; *“what’s on repeat in my mind the most is ‘do I rage-quit?’*. *Even if that means getting a warning”*.

A player also described another strategy which consists in only cutting short the conversations with the others: *“I do what we call a mute, basically I turn off the chat”*.

Comparison with tilt

The interview grid asked the players to define rage and tilt. All the participants (N=24) knew the word “rage”. The term “tilt” was unknown for almost half of the players (N=10, four participants were not questioned). Of the ten players that knew both terms, six players indicated they distinguished between the two phenomena, and the other four players described these

phenomena as equivalent and synonymous. “*We say we rage, tilt too, it’s said a lot*”.

The four players that distinguish between the two phenomena propose quite varied definitions of tilt, describing very similar characteristics, but with different intensity.

- (1) “*Tilt is more like being irritated, being bothered, inconvenienced, when a behavior bothers us and it starts to modify our mood. I think that raging is really when it angers you and it moves on to a higher level, and you just let yourself go*”; (2) “*Tilting is abandoning mentally, like a game. Playing without really thinking, because you know you’re going to lose the round, so you think it’s finished, you’re going to lose anyway. Raging is more like getting angry at other people, being more negative and sometimes even leaving the round in a game*”; (3) “*It’s harder to shake off tilt than to shake off rage. It’s really more pronounced than raging, well, at least I feel that way. You insult a lot when you’re in tilt. But then it manifests the same way as raging, it’s just in terms of intensity that it’s different for me*”; (4) “*Tilting is mostly for example, hum... When you lose many times in a row and you keep on playing, but you know that you don’t have the same level as if you were really playing. When I play without paying much attention, I keep on trucking, I don’t really think about what I’m going to do, that’s tilt. And when I rage it’s more like getting angry at other people you’re playing with, like being negative during the game and mostly in the games with teammates. But if you’re playing a game alone, raging is more like, you stop, you don’t play the game at all anymore, or almost not. Whereas tilt is more like you continue playing and you take your chance at managing to reach the objective you want*”.

Our sample included only one regular poker player and one occasional poker player. The regular player describes differences between the two phenomena. For him, tilting is rather a loss of regulation capacities, as he describes “*a loss of control and a loss of concentration*” whereas rage would be linked more to a change in attributions, as he describes “*a loss of discernment, by placing the fault of what’s happening in the game on the others*”. However,

the participant who only plays poker occasionally does not differentiate between the two phenomena and describes them as a “*form of anger, a loss of control, anger*” in both cases.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was firstly to explore and define the characteristics of rage in video gaming and to compare it with online poker tilt. The results of our thematic analysis indicate that a specific experience of loss of control exists in the context of online video games. This experience, named rage or tilt by the players, is characterized by a change in the manner of gaming caused by a feeling of frustration during the game. This phenomenon impacts the gamer on emotional, cognitive and behavioral levels.

Rage seems to be brought on by factors external to the game, mainly the interactions with the other players, and in major contests in which the gamer loses. The social and competitive components of those video games may well contribute to experiencing episodes of rage. On the emotional level, rage occurs by a loss of emotion regulation abilities resulting in anger and frustration that can involve hatred. After the rage episode, gamers described negative feelings such as guilt and self-disappointment. On a cognitive level, the impairment of reasoning abilities results in a difficulty in decision-making and in the implementation of adaptive strategies. We note an increase in the external attribution of the perceived causes of the failure in the game. After the episode, gamers describe a loss of interest and motivation for gaming. Finally, on a behavioral level, gamers highlight significant restlessness and impulsivity, that could be associated with verbal or behavioral aggressive acts. Gamers described two specific characteristics of rage episodes: (1) they are transitory, lasting from a few minutes to a few hours and (2) they are contagious. The rage involves the gamer himself, as well as his teammates and adversaries.

Gamers describe various ways of handling the episodes. First, the most frequently used method, and described as the most efficient, is stopping the game. One of the most specified

strategies is “rage-quit”, defined as an abrupt, impulsive cessation of the game due to rage. Gamers describe using rationalization in order to set a distance between them and the game. They indicate that social support plays a major role in the regulation of rage episodes, either by limiting its onset or by an incentive from other players to stop the game in order not to pass on their rage to the other members of the team.

Online video game and online poker tilts/raging episodes have some commonalities. These experiences, present in games with a social component, are described as transitory and caused by frustration. They provoke similar emotional, behavioral and cognitive expressions. These two experiences, while similar in terms of their characteristics, have different consequences. In poker, tilt provokes a loss of control of gambling behaviors, with chasing desire and difficulties in stopping the game. In video gaming, rage leads to “rage quit”, an abrupt cessation of the game, initiated by the gamer or encouraged by his teammates, and they then report a loss of interest and pleasure for the game. Tilt in poker and rage in video games are thus similar experiences with opposite consequences. According to the gamers’ descriptions, rage in video games is more behaviorally intense and the relations between gamers play a role in the regulation of these episodes. On the contrary, tilt in poker presents more cognitive components such as dissociation, a lack of inhibition and an urge to win (Moreau, Delieuvin, Chauchard, & Chabrol, 2015). We hypothesize that these differences are related to the game structure. Poker is a gambling activity played individually: other players are adversaries, whereas online video games are mostly team games.

According to these exploratory results, we hypothesize that the frequency of rage episodes may be a protective factor toward online video game excessive use. Video game rage urges the gamer to quit the game, the virtual environment, to return to reality. We could expect that the rage episodes might limit immersion in the game and in the virtual world among online video gamers. There is no existing measure to assess the frequency or the severity of rage episodes among online video gamers. Future studies should fill this gap in order to test the

relations between online video game rage and video game excessive use.

Limits

This study presents several limits. Firstly, this qualitative research was conducted with a limited sample of 24 online video gamers from three categories: FPS, MOBA, and MMORPG. The population was young and included mostly men, thus excluding a generalization of the results to the overall population of online video gamers. Moreover, the interviews were conducted via Skype. This approach does not have the advantage of face-to-face interviews, but was adapted to the methodology in order to foster the diversity of the gamers involved in the study. Finally, a qualitative analysis involves a degree of subjectivity, that we tried to limit by using two investigators to evaluate each interview.

Conclusion

This exploratory study is the first to focus on an experience which is specific to online video games. Raging in video games could be defined as a behavioral, emotional and cognitive loss of control, that may spread to other gamers through online interactions. In the context of online video games, rage episodes could represent protective factors regarding the excessive use of online video games. Futures studies should focus on the quantitative assessment of this experience.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the online video gamers sample

	n	%
Status		
Student	16	66.7
Employee	5	20.8
Unemployed	3	12.5
Level of education		
mid-highschool technical diploma	1	4.2
high-school diploma of education; first two years of university	16	54.2
university degree	6	25
Postgraduate level	4	16.7
Frequency of gaming		
Several times a day	11	45.8
Once a day	3	12.5
4 to 6 days a week	3	12.5
1 to 3 days a week	7	29.5
Duration of the gaming sessions		
1 to 2 hours	6	25
2 to 3 hours	9	37.5
3 to 4 hours	3	12.5
More than 4 hours	6	25

Appendix 1: interview grid

- ✓ Do you accept to participate in the study we presented?
- ✓ How old are you?
- ✓ When you're playing video games, are there moments when your behavior changes?
- ✓ What happens then?
- ✓ How do you call this behavior? (if "no": do you know the terms "tilt" or "rage"?)
- ✓ Is there a type of player or a standard profile of person that is susceptible to tilt or to rage?
- ✓ What does the term "tilt" evoke for you?
- ✓ How can you describe it?
- ✓ What does the term "rage" in video gaming evoke for you?
- ✓ Can you describe it for us?
- ✓ What are the situations that explain these phenomena? (causes) (explore emotions, cognition and behavior)
- ✓ How do you realize you're in this situation?
- ✓ What do you do when you're raging/tilting/other (expression, behavior)
- ✓ What are you feeling when you're raging/tilting/other? (emotion)
- ✓ What are you thinking when you're raging/tilting/other? (cognition)
- ✓ What are the consequences of raging/tilting/other? On yourself (emotion, cognition, behavior)? On the other players? On the game?
- ✓ What do you do to cope with this state?

The interview is now over, would you like to add something? ... In order to finish this participation I will just ask you to complete the questionnaire, which will take you a maximum of 5 minutes.