

Levelling up video gaming from hobby to education

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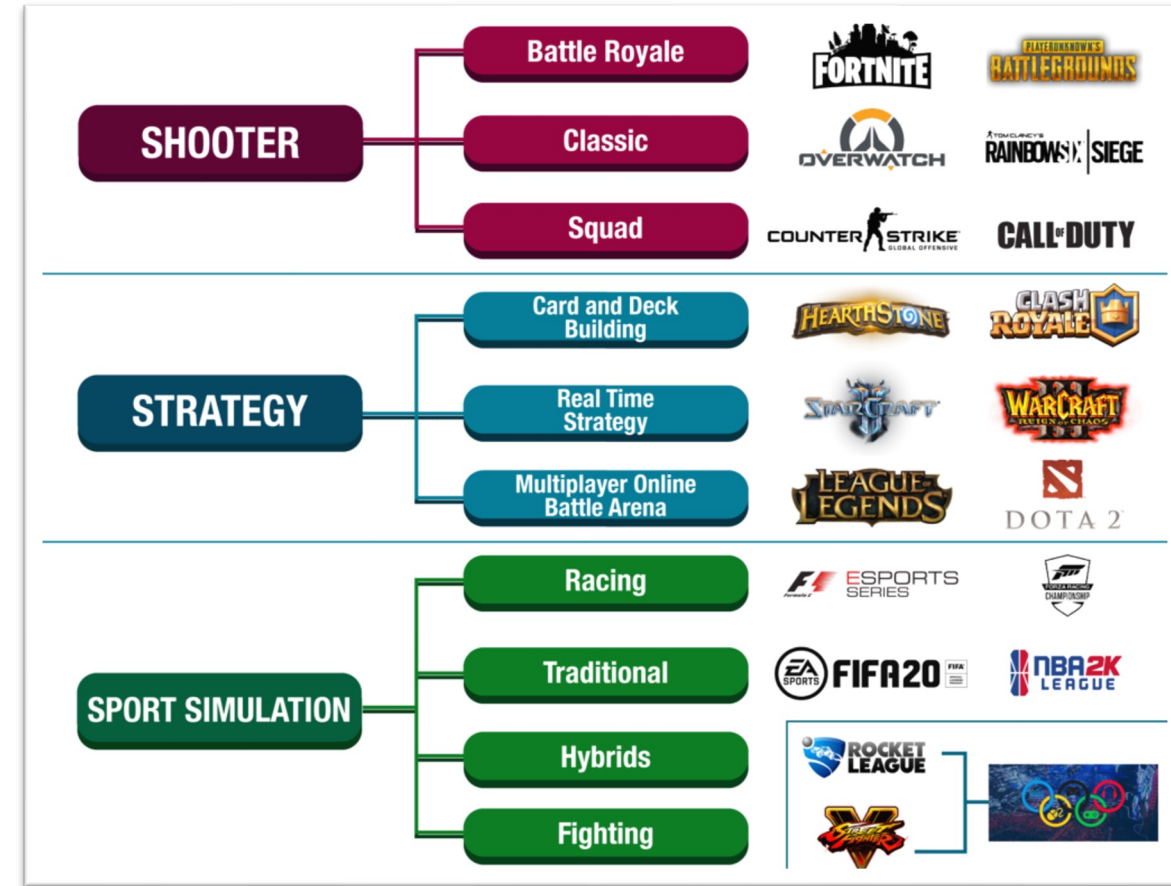
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What is esports?

- Organized competitive gaming (Pluss et al., 2022)
- From subculture to popular culture
- Involves many different genres and games
- Esports has entered the education system





Purpose and approach

- Postdoctoral research, 2020-2026
- Interviews with 12 students (9 boys, 3 girls)
- Objective: explore Norwegian high school students' experiences from an elite esports program, and how entering the program influenced other areas of their lives (e.g., gaming routines, health, future ambitions)
- Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2014)





Main themes



**1. LEVELLING UP ON
GAMING HABITS**



**2. THE 24-HOURS-
ATHLETE**



**3. AMBITIONS IN E-
SPORTS AND
EDUCATION**



1. Levelling up on gaming habits

"I think I've started playing less than before. I've realized that just playing a lot doesn't make you better. You must think about what you're doing, right" (David).

"What I get from the esports program is that I get to log my thinking about my physical and mental state, and how I perform in terms of how much sleep I have or what kind of food I eat and stuff like that" (Jakob).



2. The 24-hours-athlete

“We have a lot of focus on jogging and endurance. A game can last up to four hours and staying focused for four hours straight can be quite tiring. It's the same as chess, it can be tiring and, you just kind of sit there” (Julia).

“I'm a lot fitter as an esports athlete than if I had just been a gamer. So, I think the body has gotten better too” (Daniel).

“If I just sleep more, if I sleep optimally, I think I will perform at least 10% better as a player” (Jonas).



3. Ambitions in esports and education

“It used to be a dream, but it's not as big now. I have realized that I'm not going to be the best in the world. I just want to play and develop myself as part of a team, I would be more than happy with that” (Sarah).

"I get Higher Education Entrance Qualification and I'm allowed to play video games, that's kind of the dream" (Oscar).



Final thoughts

- Traditional sports have long been advocated as an avenue to improve health among youth (Wattanapisit et al. 2020)
- Esports = «youth sports 2.0» (Tjørndal & Skauge, 2021)
- Esports could be a new promising avenue to deliver health advice to adolescents and young adults





Other topics to be explored

- Toxicity
 - Skins and gambling-like activities
 - Transferable skills
 - Stigma
 - Mental health
- +++



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