Esports: The rise of competitive video gaming. This might seem like a ridiculous topic but wait till you see what the “Virtual athletes” make later through the read. Esports might look like wasted effort to the ordinary person but on the contrary it is a very rewarding and captivating experience at the same time.

Well how did it come up and who plays It? To answer these questions I say Esports is the the byproduct of competitiveness in humans and the rise of technology around us. Even in the early days where we used to play on arcade machines we would challenge our friends to beat the high scores. This snowballed into larger well organized events like tournaments. By the time the 1990s came around, tournaments for arcade and console games had become increasingly common, with companies like Nintendo and Blockbuster sponsoring worldwide championships.

Now who participates in these championships? There is a large population of people who assume that the players here are just the average geek or nerd who detest physical strain and would rather play from their parents’ basement. Which was true for the early days but seems to be taking a shift in course in the early 2000’s. Studies have found that gamers are more social than non-gamers and are also more adept at multi-tasking.

The players are called competitive Esport athletes. Athletes?! Really? This thought might have crossed your mind I am sure,it has also sparked a large amount of controversy. Some of you might consider this to be a stretch of the term but take these points to mind, the players here go through rigorous mental and physical training to be at the top of their game over hundreds of other players who most likely are going through the same training as well. We see new medication in the market which is currently a booming industry purely for gamers, known as nootropics which is essentially a biohack for the brain which makes it function better and faster just to increase the response time of a gamer by a few milliseconds. Yes milliseconds matter in video games. Before you jump up and say no drugs are bad we can reference this to how gatorade and protein drinks are used by athletes is similar to this. Providing this cognitive edge is taken advantage by many companies like nootrobox which have even started to sponsor Esports teams. There were also studies by scientists at the German Sports University that showed that esport professionals go through the same physical strains that of a normal athlete.

Now we dive into the numbers. No no not the boring kind. It’s all about the money here. Esports is a global industry as of now with a predicted revenue of 1.1 billion us dollars in 2019. That’s 2 years away. Esports is a compilation of many games such as Dota2, League Of Legends, Counter Strike, Call Of Duty, World Of Warcraft (yeah the one from big bang theory ) and due to the boom of the smart phone industry there are games designed for them as well. Vainglory which very recently held its 2016 world championships had a total prize pool of $120,000. As we can see this market is large and growing at a fast rate and player here have the opportunity to make it big. Take for example “The International” which is a five day Defense of the Ancients 2 (Dota 2) championship tournament. With up to 90 players from 22 countries, it’s dwarfed by the Olympics in every respect save one: the prize money. The 16 teams competing will share in a prize pool of over $20 million. The eventual champions will pocket almost $9 million split between the team of five players, and even the lowest-placing teams will still take home $101,400 in consolation prize money. $100,000 is roughly 68 Lakh Indian rupees, yeah that just happened. This is with an average of 35 to 45 minutes per game. There are also instances where players make way more money than the average Olympian. You might be thinking where do I sign up? Easy money right? Think again.

To get a basic sponsorship you'd need to be the best over 1000’s of players and this is only achieved through years of playing the games and dissecting the game mechanics. We ourselves have gamers in our college with 4000 hours in game play which is equivalent to 170 days in game!. It might look simple at first but the amount of time and effort taken in is enormous.

We all have heard the saying “Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life.” This statement is never truer than in this situation. We can see that the world is moving away from the regular repeated course it used to follow. Doing what you love and getting paid for it is true capitalism is what I say. The market does have its pros and cons. Esports is not mainstream yet. It will when your (a) 70 years old neighbor will know about it or (b) when Esports games will be broadcasted on main TV properties (which may happen faster than you think). There is also the concern of certain health issues but on the other hand it is growing at a rapid pace and winning the prize money will get you going places. We still may debate on whether Esports is a legitimate sport or not but that is for a later time. Games are all around us now a days, young or old everyone plays it at some point in their lives. It is you who decides how it effects your life.

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Images that can be used