

Research Presentation

COMP230

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November 6, 2018

Background

Depression is a common illness worldwide, with more than 300 million people affected. When long-lasting and with moderate or severe intensity depression may become a serious health condition. At its worst, depression can lead to suicide. Close to 800 000 people die due to suicide every year. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in 15-29 year-olds[1].

The Issue

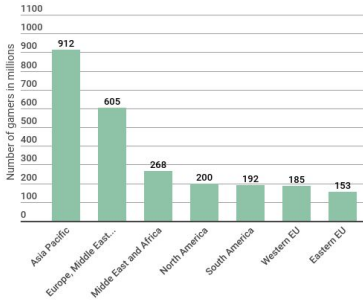
During this preliminary research it has been confirmed that there are no guidelines specific to the video game industry in regards to how suicide and depression are handled in video games.

Popularised guidelines do exist for portraying suicide in the news[2][3] and drama adaptations[4].

The drama adaptation guidelines match best with a video game environment and could possibly be implemented as guidelines for video games. However due to the artistic style, interactivity and immersion of video games it might be best to form more specific industry guidelines.

Importance

2016 Recorded Number of Video Gamers in
Millions (by Region)



With over
2.5 billion people playing video
games the ability for games
to effect players is dramatic.

National Statistics

- ▶ 6,213 suicides in the UK and Ireland last year[5].
- ▶ In the UK men are three times as likely to take their own lives than women, and in the Republic of Ireland four times as likely[5].
- ▶ 19.7% of over 16's in the UK showed symptoms of anxiety or depression in 2014[6].
- ▶ A higher proportion of women (22.5%) than men (16.8%) indicated they had some feelings of depression[6].

References

- [1] W. H. Organization, “Depression: Fact sheets,” accessed on 2018-11-06. [Online]. Available: <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression>
- [2] W. H. Organization *et al.*, “Preventing suicide: a resource for media professionals, update 2017,” 2017.
- [3] J. Nepon, S. Fotti, L. Y. Katz, and J. Sareen, “Media guidelines for reporting suicide,” *Canadian Psychiatric Association Position Paper*, vol. 5, 2009.
- [4] Samaritans, “Drama portrayal: Fact sheets,” accessed on 2018-11-06. [Online]. Available: https://www.samaritans.org/sites/default/files/kcfinder/files/Factsheet_drama%20portrayal%20Feb16%20web.pdf
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