# Project 1

## Part 2: The Positive Impacts of Video Games.

Over the years of playing, there have been quite a few instances where video games have given benefits to the players. Despite the negatives that people have come to find out about them, there have been highlights as well in which helps the players and developers of the video games. When the positives of video games are kept in mind, people will help the developers create more types of video games that come close to their liking and experiment with new or different types of game approaches to see if that reaction will be helpful or have a opposite effect. Below are the possible types of positive impacts that video games will have on many people. These impacts are sometimes not mentioned due to how poorly video games have been seen by some public, but well-known source outlets.

Lavandier, A., M. (2016, October 7). Debunked: The “Gamer” Stereotype. *Medium*. <https://medium.com/the-nerd-castle/debunked-the-gamer-stereotype-69be0e4ee0d7>

In this article, Lavandier goes over the different types of stereotypes that have been brought up about Gamers as a whole. They also debunk these types of stereotypes with counter arguments and information from other sources. The main argument focuses more on promoting video games as more of a positive than a negative.

Kowert, R. [Psychgeist]. (2020, July 14). Academic Ramblings: Video Games and Friendship. [Video]. Youtube. <https://youtu.be/OOrJe7Xn0po>

Dr. Kowert describes in the video about how Video games and friendship are tied in with each other. They mention how the friendship quality increases when two play video games with each other rather than alone. This helps with the narrative of the positive impacts that video games can bring people.

Kowert, R. [Psychgeist]. (2021, November 24). Research Review: Positive Escapism. [Video]. Youtube. <https://youtu.be/fOxb6ca8nG0>

In this video, Dr. Kowert explains how video games can be used to escape the reality. She describes this as a bit of a coping mechanism since there could be situations that happen outside and video games could be the go to in order to come back to the situation with a much clear mind and positive state. Using this video helps express the idea of how video games as a whole can be impactful on one’s life and state of mind.

Desurvire, H. Wiberg, C. (2009, July). Game Usability Heuristics (PLAY) for Evaluating and Designing Better Games: The Next Iteration. *ResearchGate*. 577-566.

One of the impacts that video games have brought to people is that they can create communities and groups for them. This includes tournaments, gatherings, or events. One good event was the HUE Invitational this year. More than 100 people from different universities and schools have shown up to demonstrate how far they have come in the video game they are playing and show off their skills to the audience. These types of interactions are usually meant to showcase their adoration and passion for a certain game.

Another example, Undertale has a growing community of people that support the game and the creator. They have created their own stories and sequels from the game as well since anything can happen afterwards.

There are people that will make certain groups with friends that share the same interest. According to Lavandier (2016), “approximately 72 percent of gamers stated that they game with their friends”. This means that people will find more enjoyment when playing video games with friends rather than alone. The more time they play together as well, the more likely they’ll be fond of each other. This will cause both players to become more lenient with each other. Kowert (2020) has stated that playing together can increase friendship quality. What this means is that they’ll be often inviting each other to events or talk about certain topics that they would with anyone else they consider having a strong bond with.

A second impact that video games have brought people is that they are able to teach. What this means is that there are video games that can be educational to people or able to teach people about lessons that are essential in life. A video game can teach one person the consequences of their actions. Undertale is a good example of this as doing certain actions in the game will stick to the save file and brought up as well. This includes dying as well since the way of the game will change depending on the number of deaths a person gets throughout the game. PC Building Simulator is an educational game that fits this impact as well. This game goes through the process of how of how one would build a basic computer. While there are different brands out there that have different methods of installation and building, this does explain what exactly the type of materials the player would be working with when they decide to make their own computer with their own hands.

A third impact that these video games have is that they are used to help with tough scenarios that happen through the course of life. What this means is that there could be a situation that is hard for one to process. Video games can be the light in the darkness that will help them get through this situation and help them think less horribly about it. An example to showcase this was during one of the events that took place during 2022’s HUE Invitational. One of the players from the HUE Invitational in 2022 had lost their mother. This affected how they had played the game and they played their matches for her. This did help since their mother told them not to miss out on the opportunity that was provided in the HUE Invitational. Kowert (2021) mentions that “actively engaging in video games relieves stress by empowering players and projecting them into fantasy worlds, boosting a sense of presence and immersion”. What she essentially means by this is that players would be able to free themselves from the stress of reality at times whenever they need a way to cope or feel more positive. Thus, video games make this fantasy world for them to go towards. When they are ready to come back and face the problem, they will have in mind that they can go back to this fantasy world at any time if it becomes too much once more.

A fourth impact that video games tend to have on people is that they can cause a sense of motivation. What this means is that there are people who can feel inspired from playing the game they enjoy. Whether that would be before or after they have already played it, they will continue to persist on until the end with the means necessary. There’s always some sort of element that keeps them going through the game in order to finish it. For example, Desurvire and Wiberg (2009) mentioned that skill development is “an important component in a gamer’s positive game experience”. They also mention that it is the “pacing of learning that skill that divides”. This is related to the motivation of the player since they are taking their time learning the ropes and new things that can be done within the game that they play. The more they master that skill, the more likely they would want to test out that certain skill and learn even more skills to add to their collection. That inspiration can be used in many different scenarios. A video game can also encourage them to reach new levels that is different from their current one. What this means is that there are some video games that have motivational messages that can give the player courage to get a better result. Some messages as example can be “don’t give up”, “reach for the top”, “I know you can do it”, and more. These messages and other methods give each other meaning as they form together to give that player a sense of motivation to keep pushing onwards.

A fifth impact that video games tend to have on people is that they help address situations that could be affecting the real world. What this means is that there could be situations that are unknown to the player that the game developer is passionate about or wants the player to be aware of. So, in order for the player to be aware of that problem or situation, the developer will add references to it or directly tell the player some of the events that take place using their game. Due to that, the player now has a bit of an understanding of an event that could have taken place within on the world and could do their best to process that information into their minds and react how they can to it. For example, David Axel, known on the internet as Sr Pelo, made a short game known as “Whatta Horrible Year”. This game was a shooting game which references the bad events that took place in the year of 2020. This being a scare of a war that could have happened, forest fires that took out a bit of wildlife in some areas, and COVID-19.

A sixth impact that video games can have on someone is that they can be supportive to that person. What this means is that there could be problems that they don’t want to discuss with others, but a game will influence them to feel more comfortable. Whether that support can be mental or emotional, it will definitely help the player who may have issues feel more comfortable as they are supported. That game can also do it’s best to give them a talk if there was something that needs to be corrected. A game could show them the impact of their choices and what scenarios would happen if they continued a certain path or go down a different path.

A seventh impact that video games can have on society is that they can represent different types of groups and content. What this means is that there will be moments in video games where something or someone can be identifiable by the player through certain sections of gameplay and actions. For example, there is an interactive story known as Adventures with Anxiety. This story demonstrates how anxiety can be at times while giving it a character as well. It can be both helpful to have and a pain to endure as well since there will be times where you’ll as through you’ll miss an opportunity, make a bad judgement call which leaves the impression that you are being judged for every bad action you do, or get hurt by those actions that were taken. This can also be the exact opposite as there are moments where you could luck out or be saving yourself thanks to the anxiety stopping you. This is a good representation of anxiety as it isn’t something that is inheritably bad unlike how it is portrayed in different types of media where it is nothing but a bad thing.

The eighth impact that video games can have when playing is that they can enhance current skills that have already been achieved. This means that players can increase their level of skill in certain aspects that are already familiar with them. As mentioned before by Desurvire and Wiberg (2009): skill development is “an important component in a gamer’s positive game experience”. These skills can include writing, math, and other important skills. For example, there is a game that is called Slay Uncool Monsters. This is a math game that helps increase the speed and the thinking of math answers. There are also critical thinking games which test the knowledge of the player based on what information that they have received from playing the game.

The ninth impact that video games tend to have been that they, as a whole, can also bring humor to players. What this essentially means is that they are capable of making a player laugh or feel enlightened by the given situation that the video game offers. The Henry Stickmin Collection does a good job with the humor aspect of the video game. Due to the many options the player can take and the fact that they are rewarded for failing as well, this encourages the player to find out what each option does and get the results. These options are often ones that make the player question the logic behind the decision, the situation that Henry is in, or laugh at how the most thought of answer isn’t the correct answer.

The tenth impact that video games tend to have is that they can involve people of any gender. What this essentially means is that there won’t be a stigma or a stereotype that only focuses on a certain gender only for video game production. Lavandier (2016) mentions this by giving the fact that “approximately 52 percent of men and 48 percent of women play video games”. There is also the inclusion of custom created characters that can be of different genders. This way, the player can identify themselves within the game that they are playing and also get the feeling of involvement in the story. Some video games also have a female lead within them as well to further disprove the stereotype of them being targeted towards only one certain gender.

One big impact that video games have brought is that they have become very rewarding. What this means is that they offer a lot more than what can be bargained for, especially during different types of events. For example, the HUEC (HU Esports Club) will sometimes host tournaments for a certain video game with different types of prizes as well. Those prizes can be beneficial in both certain video games and outside of video games. This inspires different players to come and take that risk in order to get the reward even if they are against more than they might have thought.

There are more benefits that video games can offer aren’t fully mentioned. Each player can get their own type of perspective whenever they play the video games. Sometimes they could require a second viewing to fully understand what was received from them. Though video games tend to have problems overall, we should not let those problems get in the way of the overall enjoyment of the game. If we do, we will only be giving blind reviews based on what was heard and not what was experienced. Therefore, both negative and positives are important.

## References

Fox, T. (2015) Undertale (PC Version) [Video Game]. Fox, T.

PC Building Simulator (PC Version) [Video Game]. (2018). The Irregular Corporation, SH Games Studio.

Axel, D. (2020) Whatta Horrible Year (PC) [Video Game].

Lavandier, A., M. (2016, October 7). Debunked: The “Gamer” Stereotype. *Medium*. <https://medium.com/the-nerd-castle/debunked-the-gamer-stereotype-69be0e4ee0d7>

Kowert, R. [Psychgeist]. (2020, July 14). Academic Ramblings: Video Games and Friendship. [Video]. Youtube. <https://youtu.be/OOrJe7Xn0po>

Kowert, R. [Psychgeist]. (2021, November 24). Research Review: Positive Escapism. [Video]. Youtube. <https://youtu.be/fOxb6ca8nG0>

Desurvire, H. Wiberg, C. (2009, July). Game Usability Heuristics (PLAY) for Evaluating and

Designing Better Games: The Next Iteration. *ResearchGate*. 577-566.