



## THE RISE OF ESPORTS DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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# **THE RISE OF ESPORTS DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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## Abstract

**Background:** Esports is the newest form of entertainment for the masses. Esports is an up and coming sports industry that can connect people all around the world. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced to spend more time indoors.

**Objective:** The aim of this study is to examine how Covid-19 has affected the Esports Industry and what is in store for the Esports industry post Covid-19 pandemic.

**Design and Method:** The research method is based on current literature regarding the Esports industry and Covid-19. Journal articles, studies, and popular news are reviewed and reported in the Results section. The research questions are:

*What affect did Covid-19 have on the Esports Industry?*

*What will happen to the Esports industry after quarantines are lifted?*

**Results:** The significance of this study is that the Esports industry has had rapid growth due to Covid-19 and will have significant impact on the economy going forward. Social Media and technology has changed the world's way of life. If some ways of life changes many others soon follow suit such as sports. The sports world is adapting and learning to be less traditional and accept the new frontier of sports, Esports.

**Conclusions:** Esports is a new and exciting industry and now is the time to hop on board. As exciting playing video games and watching live streams of competitions is it should be done in moderation for individuals mental and physical health. Covid-19 has helped the Esports industry grow rapidly but the industry will be able to stand on its own going forward and will thrive.

**Keywords:** Esports, Video Games, Traditional Sports, Covid-19, Pandemic, Lockdown, Quarantine

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Introduction**

The way humanity lives life is ever changing. When our parents were young, they would play outside all day figuring out different things to keep them entertained. As technology has developed over time, new generations of kids have transitioned to entertaining themselves inside. When the first video game was created in 1958 it sparked a new revolution of indoor gaming (Tretkoff, 2008). First came arcades where people would spend hours on hours playing the varying different machines. From these machines players would compete against others to have the best scores and what sprung out of this fierce competition was Esports. There would be tournaments held to see who would be the world champion of each game. As time progressed, the consumer demanded at home gaming and that brought about our current era of gaming. Gamers transitioned away from single player games in arcades to at home gaming consoles that you could run multiple different games on. This sparked the creation of a new industry called Esports.

Esports is a competitive gaming industry where people from all over the world compete against each other to see who is the best at their craft. There are varying types of games such as First-Person shooter, Multiplayer Online Battle Arenas (MOBA), Sports, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Shooters, Fighting, and Real-Time Strategy (Antin, 2020). Every Esport game platform is different from each other and they all come with their own strategies and difficulties. Some Esport games are individual play but most games involve a team approach to defeat the opposing team (Sexton, 2020). Video games have developed over time to the point that it requires teammates to be in constant communication with each other so they are able to perform varying tactics together. “Based on the history of

eSports (sports video or electronic sports) game playing, eSports may be classified into two eras: the arcade era and the Internet era.

During the early arcade era (from the 1980s to 1990s), popular eSports games included NBA Jam and Virtua Racing (Electronic Sports, 2009). Other eSports games gained their popularity with the evolution of the Internet through local area networks (LAN)” (Lee, Schoenstedt, 2011 Para. 2). The current era of gaming has developed to the point that it can connect people across the world through the use of Internet connection. When being able to connect with the Internet it allows you to be anywhere and play anywhere as well as allows Esports to grow exponentially. Esports is able to make the most of our current technological advances and create an atmosphere of communication and togetherness through the use of streaming services. Popular Esport users do live streams of them playing the game and connecting with their fan base (Dupont, 2020). Esports has many similarities to “traditional” sports and is now starting to get acknowledged on level footing as them. As Esports gain more popularity their fan bases grow, which then in turn allows the industry to draw more revenue. This creates a profitable industry and can sustain itself and continue growing for a long time.

Esports is an industry on the rise but it all depends on the games themselves to capture its customers. People are drawn to video games because they can be an escape from real life. In video games you are able to be anything and do anything imaginable. They also draw people in because there is a constant strive to learn the strategies behind the games, which makes it easier to overcome different challenging levels. There is always a sense of accomplishment after beating the game, which can at times feel addicting. These are some of the reasons people have been drawn to video games and a

large part as to why they have grown into such a large industry. While this topic of

Esports has significance to me, it has even greater significance to the populace. With video games and Esports on the rise, the industry has shown a significant financial gain to the economy and also shows a trend in our culture. Our culture right now is intertwined with the digital space. Social Media runs many people's lives and people often even make a career out of it. With Covid-19 spreading across the world many businesses have been forced to move their employees to a work from home status. Being able to accomplish work from home shows how in our current society were able communicate online and don't need to interact with others in person. This can show a potential shift in our culture and where we may be heading in the future.

This paper discusses Esports and our current pandemic, Covid-19. This paper will be proving how Esports has not only been unaffected by the life-halting Covid-19, but is flourishing in the pandemic and that there will be a future growth of the industry post lockdown. The research questions associated with this study is:

***RQ #1: What affect did Covid-19 have on the Esports Industry?***

***RQ #2: What will happen to the Esports industry after quarantines are lifted?***

These research questions will be explored in the Results and Discussion sections of this paper.

## **Chapter 2 Literature Review**

The culture of humanity is ever changing, and what we use to entertain ourselves is always evolving. Over generations, games have developed from having physical forms such as cards, board games, and sports like baseball and have now evolved to electronics such as video games. In the 1950s, the first video game came out called Pong. It was a simple concept of a game, but it was a new beginning to the world. In recent months a new sport has gained a larger fan base. It is called Esports, and with it, the videogames culture has expanded exponentially. Esports consists of professional gamers playing against each other in various video games. These competitions are similar to those of other sports; they all have the same end goal, and that is for the athletes to play to win. Due to the recent pandemic of Covid-19 and everyone across the nation being forced to quarantine, Esports has gained a large gathering of people in this time of self-isolation. With this sudden surge in Esports due to the quarantine, the future of Esports post lockdown is uncertain. However, as uncertain as it may be, there will be increased interest in the different Esports in the future.

A challenge when picking a topic about Esports and Covid-19 is that it is incredibly new and relatively unexplored. There is not much information out there about the casualty of the two and what may come in the future. There can never be real certainty for the future; however, there are many theoretical educated guesses. This research will not be published. A significant challenge was finding a topic to explore that held my interest. In conducting a research topic search and putting in a lot of time, I was able to find a topic I have a lot of interest in and have ample outside knowledge.



## **Users and Gratification Theory and Motivational Theory**

Esports is not a traditional sport like baseball, soccer, or football. It requires the use of technology, and instead of using your whole body to move around, it uses your mind and your hand coordination. Similar to traditional sports, they have the same theories behind them of Uses and Gratification Theory and Motivational Theory. “Bernard Suits identifies the elements of sports as being the ones of the game (1988a, 43)—these are: to have a pre-*lusory* goal pursued by using *lusory* means, while having constitutive rules and doing it with a *lusory* attitude—plus four additional elements. A sport needs to be a game of skill, which consists in a physical activity, and such game needs to have a wide following and a certain degree of stability. Therefore, according to Suits’ definition we can say that a sport ‘is the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles’ (game’s definition) provided that it entails a physical skill and it has achieved a certain level of institutionalization”(Llorens, 2017, p.467). This point is important to know that there is a definition of what is considered a sport. Later on, in this article the author proves that Esports is a sport, which then makes theories that go with a traditional sport, become a theory for Esports such as the Uses and Gratification Theory and the Motivational Theory.

In traditional sports, watching can have a gratification effect on the viewers, such as seeing your team win the game makes you happy and can help you escape into that world for a small amount of time. For example, the Sports Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS) includes the statement, “One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is that doing so gives me the opportunity to temporarily escape life’s problems” In contrast, a similar item in the Motivation Scale of Sports Consumption (MSSC) stated,

“The game provides an escape from my day-to-day routine.” The MSSC relies on a similar theoretical understanding as to Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT), in that it focuses on the gratification and experiences that sports consumption affords for spectators” (Hamari, Sjöblom, 2017, p.214). The quote talks about the different gratifications that affect people watching sports and Esports. There are many different types of motivations in watching and participating in Esports. They can create a goal for you to work towards, enjoyable to watch; you can learn about the sport, to name a few. These happen in traditional sports as well, and that what makes up such a large industry. “In more recent theories, there are various other types of motives that represent various personal, social, structural, and game-related features giving individuals a chance to gratify unfulfilled needs by engaging in eSports games” (Lee, Cianfrone, Byon, & Schoenstedt, 2010, as cited in Lee, 2010, p. 40). This quote shows some of the motivations behind Esports. Esports is a growing industry, and just like traditional sports has theories behind it that drive the viewers and participants.

### **Background of Esports**

The first video game was Pong in the 1950s; that game consisted of two players using a paddle to get the ball past the other. Since then, video games have blown up into huge multiplayer games that can connect people worldwide. “Based on the history of eSports (sports video or electronic sports) game playing, eSports may be classified into two eras: the arcade era and the Internet era. During the early arcade era (from the 1980s to 1990s), popular eSports games included NBA Jam and Virtua Racing. Other eSports games gained popularity with the evolution of the Internet through local area networks (LAN). The advancement of LAN technology changed the mode of eSports consumption

from human-versus- machine to human-versus-human (Griffiths, Davies, & Chappell, 2003)” (Lee, 2010, p.39). Once the arcade era began, Esports became possible. There would be tournaments set up for players to compete against each other in who could get the best score. As time has progressed, the competition moved on from Human vs. Machine to Human vs. Human. The first Esport to bring the world attention to the growth of the Esport industry was called League of Legends or LOL. The game was created back in 2009 and since then has been a cornerstone of the Esports industry. “As a result, LOL is one of the most important eSports to study and consider nowadays, both for Riot’s normative development and for its social implications, but, above all, for its institutionalization as a sport”(Llorens, 2010, p.466). This Esport has helped get the industry to where it is today or the verge of massive growth.

### **How Covid-19 Has Affected Esports**

Recently the world has gone into a state of panic. A virtually unknown virus spread across the planet at an alarming rate, and to combat this virus, we were forced into quarantine. This virus is Covid-19, and since the end of February and beginning of March, a majority of the planet has been in self-isolation. Many people never having gone through something of this magnitude before and needing something to do they have taken to Esports. There has been an increase in watching and playing Esports. “But the community of active gamers is going to continue to grow based on the increasing time spent indoors. This combined with the absence of traditional sporting events has led to a surge in Esports streaming audiences. A positive indicator for industry growth” (Antin 2020, para.18). This quote shows that due to increase time indoors. Traditional sports are not being schedule due to the spread of COVID-19. Since there is an absence of sports

there is an increase in Esport viewership. “Verizon has reported an increase in gaming traffic during peak hours of 75%, compared to increases of 12% increase in digital video traffic and 20% in web traffic. Meanwhile, data from Streamlabs shows that platforms like Twitch, YouTube Gaming, and Facebook Gaming have also experienced a surge in growth, with around a 20% increase in usage hours reported across services” (Hall, 2020, para. 10). This data represents the shown growth of the industry due to Covid-19. Sites such as Twitch and YouTube have gotten increased usage due to Esports’ popularity on the rise. There was substantial growth within these past few months, but there can be a downside to this much growth in such a short amount of time.

### **Difference in Opinion**

As the researcher, I am looking towards the positives of eSports rather than look at the negative side. Due to Covid-19 forcing everyone to shelter in place, it has caused an increase in viewership and gaming of Esports. With the increase of viewership, it has led to massive growth in the industry. That is all well and good, but at what cost has it done to people’s physical and mental health. Spending so much time indoors can cause people not to get as much exercise, which will hurt their physical health. Spending so much time watching and playing video games can lead to mental problems that can stick around after quarantine. “A further concern is that, if some individuals may develop, increase, or relapse into unhealthy patterns of gaming to relieve pandemic-related stress, self-isolation restrictions may inhibit help-seeking and present barriers for those in treatment” (King, Delfabbro, 2020, p.185). Pandemics are a scary, and trying time and some people may choose to use Esports as an escape where they can be in a happy place. For some, this could be a good thing, but if people are unable to return to normal life after

Covid-19, this behavior can cause lasting psychological problems. Esports has gotten a lot of growth due to Covid-19 but some differ in the opinion its not doing as well as it may seem. “When the events are moved online, cancelled, or postponed, these revenue streams will be reduced if not extinguished completely. This consequence of the pandemic should not to be ignored and its effects can already be felt. For example, Newzoo, a market insights and analytics company focused on esports, revised downwards the estimated revenues expected to be generated by esports during 2020, from \$1,100.1 million to \$1,059.3 million, directly as a result of events being cancelled, postponed, or moved online. Newzoo also revised the 2020 forecast for merchandise and tickets downward from \$121.7 million to \$106.5 million and media rights and sponsorship forecasts from \$185.4 million to \$176.2 million and \$636.9 million to \$614.9 million respectively” (Grossobell, 2020, para.14). The article talks about how in reality Esports is affected by the pandemic negatively not just positively. Esports has taken a large revenue hit due to competitions and events either be cancelled or being moved on line. The article agrees that there has been growth in the Esports industry, but it has been affected due to Covid-19, while other articles say it has not been as affected. The future for Esports is bright, but what will it look like post-pandemic.

### **The Future of Esports Post-Quarantine**

The future is bright for the Esports industry. The industry has gained more popularity due to Covid-19, and the quarantined has given it a boom for the future, too. The main goal for the future is to retain its current growth and fan base. Having gained live broadcasts during quarantine because of the lack of traditional sports has helped Esports spread, and the plan is to keep those broadcasts for the future when traditional

sports return. Once live events return, Esports will have one of its main features back and will grab the attention of the new fans made in quarantine. “Analysts have described esports as being “popularized and legitimized in an unpredictable and profound way,” thanks to the unprecedented (and accidental) adoption of esports by broadcasters, leagues and athletes seeking to engage fans. “Among younger demographic groups, a prolonged shutdown for traditional sports leagues may drive more fans to esports on a regular basis – which globally would represent tens of millions of new consumers for the industry”, says Sepso”(Hall, 2020, para.24). The future is uncertain for all but with how the Esports industry looks like now, it will be around for the near future. “Further research from Newzoo- published prior to the worldwide spread of Covid-19 – suggests that global esports-specific revenues will grow by US\$150 million in 2020 to reach US\$1.1 billion, with sponsorships and media rights income accounting for three quarters of that total figure. Both are expected to jump to US\$1.2 billion by 2023, thanks in part to a rise in awareness and audience numbers in emerging markets across Latin America, the Middle East and Africa, and Southeast Asia”(Dixon, 2020, para.22). The income for the future is expected to jump from Covid-19 for the future making the Esports industry an area with a lot of growth and profit. Esports has been a part of a new wave of technology coming into our culture, but just like with most things in life and history, change is inevitable and Esports is an added wave of sports.

### Chapter 3: Methods

The design of this study is qualitative. I researched the rise of Esports industry and what the future holds for it. The research I found will be primarily used for two different areas: The effect Covid-19 had on Esports in the present and what is. This topic is based on current information from February 2020 – June 2020. The research was found online and consisted of peer-reviewed journals and popular news articles. To find my research resources, I used the Purchase Library database and Google Scholar. My sources are from the height of quarantine due to Covid-19 and speculations on the industry's future.

My research questions are as follow:

***RQ #1: What affect did Covid-19 have on the Esports Industry?***

***RQ #2: What will happen to the Esports industry after quarantines are lifted?***

I had use specific terms to find my peer-reviewed journals and popular news source articles. Search terms I used were: *Esports and Covid-19, Esports History, Esports and quarantine, The future of Esports, and What is in store for the Esports industry*. Once I had all the resources I needed for my study, I broke them up into five categories: Theories behind Esports, the history of Esports, the affect Covid-19 has had on Esports, differing of opinions on Esports, and the future of Esports post quarantine. I had a crossover of some of my articles because they were able to provide research for multiple categories. After all, the Esports industry is fairly known, yet so many articles like to give information to inform people about the industry and then get into their topic.

As the researcher, I chose the topic of Esports because it is a rapidly growing industry and something close to me. I have a great interest in this topic, and my

knowledge has grown even further after researching. Esports is a vital area currently for the sports enthusiast. Covid-19 has put the world of sports on hold making, many industries start to decline while the Esports industry was able to thrive in the environment. This growth has shown how far our culture has changed over the years and its direction. It shows that people can do more online and apart and become digital rather than needing everything in real life.

My research was limited in a multitude of ways. The first was by a time restriction. My summer class is only eight weeks long, and I wasn't able to do as deep a dive of this research as I would like. The next limitation was because this topic is so current; there is not as much information out there, so I needed to use what I could. and there were more popular new source articles then there were scholarly journals. Lastly was also due to my topic being current. Due to my topic being so current, there is new information popping up every day, and because of my time restriction, I had to come to a point where I had to stop using new information and use what I had found.

I am planning to use this information to show the impact Covid-19 has had on this industry and its future. In chapter four, I will describe the results of my study.



## Chapter 4: Results

The researcher studied the impact of Covid-19 on the Esports industry. The Esports industry had been a growing industry since the first videogame came out in 1950. Recently the Esports industry has experienced massive growth while the world had to undergo quarantine because of a pandemic. During this time, there has been substantial growth in the Esports industry. I used peer-reviewed scholarly articles and articles from popular new sources for my research. I'm investigating what impact Covid-19 has had on the Esports industry and what is in store for its future. Esports were researched help the masses learn about a rapidly growing industry. I analyzed the data through the use of targeted articles relating to my research questions. Chapter IV Results contains the results to my methodology study, which was conducted to answer the following research question(s):

***RQ #1: What affect did Covid-19 have on the Esports Industry?***

***RQ #2: What will happen to the Esports industry after quarantines are lifted?***

My objective of this research paper was to talk about an industry that, in a time of panic and uncertainness was able to thrive while many other industries were forced to take drastic measures to stay afloat. This pandemic has taken a significant toll on society and our economy. Many industries were put on hold for a time because of quarantine. As time went on, varying industries have been able to adjust to remote work, but the industry that had helped to pave that way was the Esports industry. In this section, we will discover the reason behind Esports rapid growth and what is in store for the industry post-quarantine life.

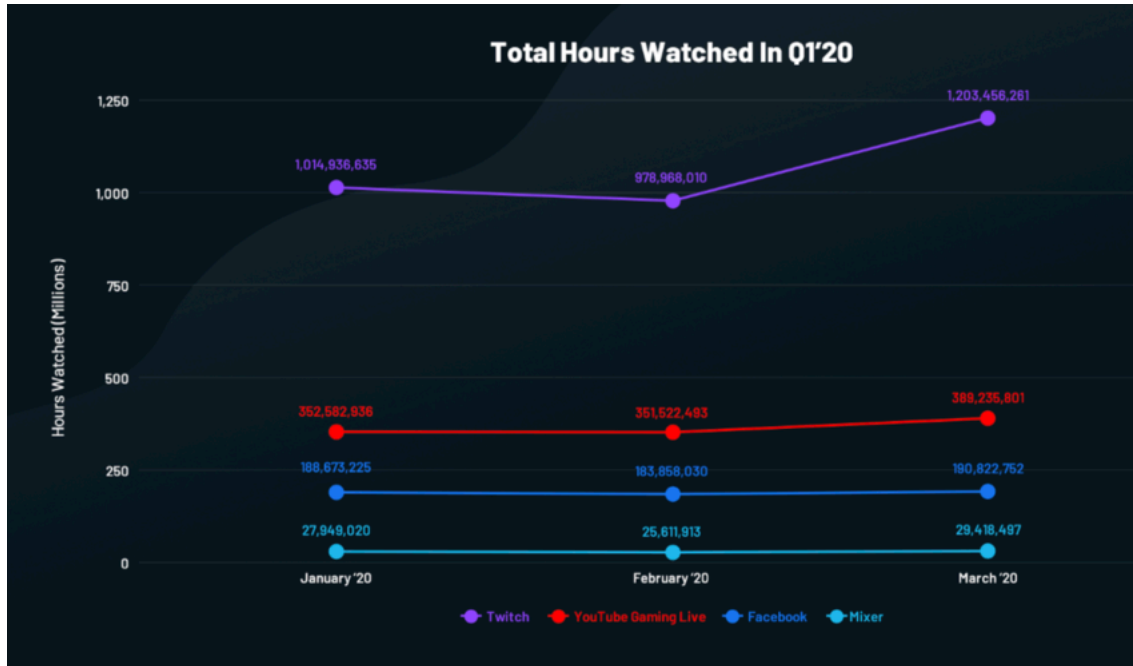
### **RQ #1: What affect did Covid-19 have on the Esports Industry?**

The first research question I'm going to provide results for is, "What effect did Covid-19 have on the Esports Industry?" For this study, this is the central question. Esports has been gaining popularity over the years, but I will show the effects Covid-19 has had on this industry. Covid-19 has created a pandemic worldwide. As a way to combat this pandemic, many countries have been forced to impose a lockdown on their citizens. As a result of the lockdown, citizens are spending an increased amount of time indoors, and with little to do, because few were able to work from home. "But the community of active gamers is going to continue to grow based on the increasing time spent indoors. The increase in time, combined with the absence of traditional sporting events, has led to a surge in Esports streaming audiences. A positive indicator for industry growth"(Antin, 2020, para.15). This quote gives reference to how there has been an increase in citizens staying home and a lack of traditional sports; this industry has been able to grow from their ashes. "Verizon has reported an increase in gaming traffic during peak hours of 75%, compared to increases of 12% increase in digital video traffic and 20% in web traffic.

Meanwhile, data from Streamlabs shows that platforms like Twitch, YouTube Gaming, and Facebook Gaming have also experienced a surge in growth, with around a 20% increase in usage hours reported across services"(Hall, 2020, Para. 10). This data represents how the online streaming of varying different Esports has increased due to Covid-19. Figure 1, shows the increased hours of streaming hours, which is from January to March. Figure 1 shows how there was a drastic increase from February to March,

which corresponds to the same period Covid-19 had spread globally. The referenced articles and Figure 1 answer Research Question 1.

*Figure 1; Total Hours Watched in Q1 '20 (Hall, 2020)*

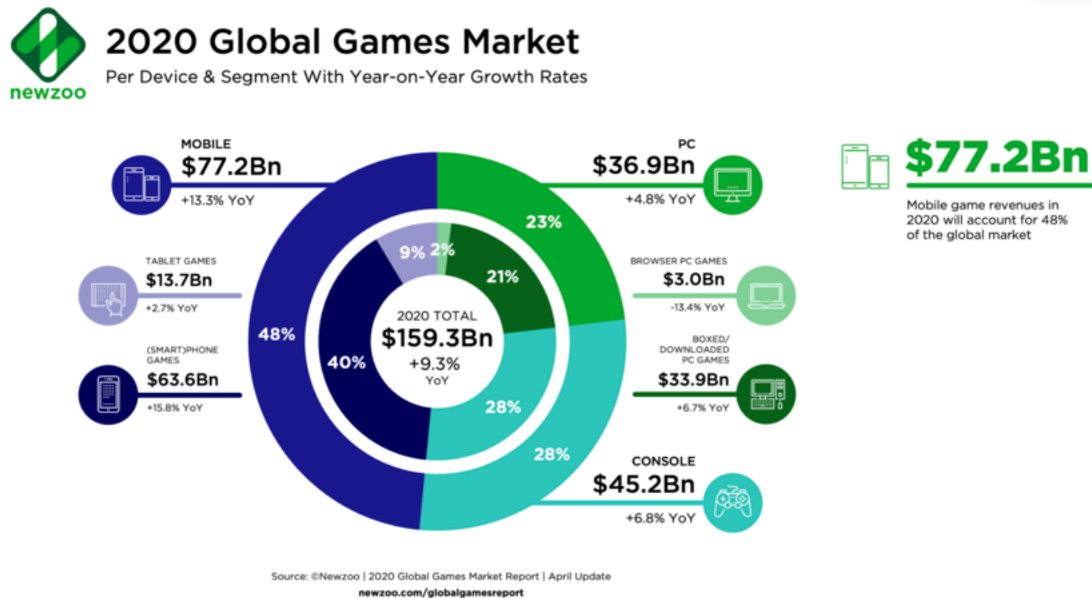


## RQ #2: What will happen to the Esports industry after quarantines are lifted?

With the Esports industry on the rise due to Covid-19, the next line of thinking must be what will be held in store for this growing industry. “The pandemic may lead to the **normalization of esports**. Analysts have described esports as being “popularized and legitimized in an unpredictable and profound way,” thanks to the unprecedented (and accidental) adoption of esports by broadcasters, leagues and athletes seeking to engage fans. “Among younger demographic groups, a prolonged shutdown for traditional sports leagues may drive more fans to esports on a regular basis – which globally would represent tens of millions of new consumers for the industry,” says Sepso”(Hall, 2020, para. 24).

One of the most profound changes that will happen for the Esports industry is the normalization of the Esports industry. Having the industry be compared to other traditional sports avenues will legitimize the industry and create even more growth. “Recent developments will likely inch esports towards the mainstream. The earliest proof point is Nevada, which legalized betting on competitive gaming just two weeks into confinement measures in the US” (Hall, 2020, para. 25). That is an example of how the industry has grown to the point that one of the biggest gambling states has started allowing betting on this industry. Betting will become a trend going forward around the world, putting Esports on the same level as traditional sports. In Figure 2 it shows the future data for the gaming industry. The future earnings for the industry are profitable for the near future. One year of earnings for this industry can show its future trends and will be earning more every year.

Figure 2: 2020 Global Games Market



The Esports industry is a growing industry, but it is not without its issues. On one hand the industry is growing, but there is speculations that the industry is being hurt, and the information out there is not very transparent. A significant aspect of Esports industry is how it is harming people's mental health. The Esports industry consists of a lot of in-person events. They have lost a significant amount of revenue due to Covid-19 forcing events to shut down or go online. "The effects of the pandemic and the ubiquitous ban on large gatherings has meant that many of these events will not be able to take place as planned. Some of the most anticipated events have already been canceled, such as the 2020 Pokémon World Championships ('Pokémon W.C. '), which was due to take place in August in London. The 2019 Pokémon W.C. championship was held in Washington, D.C., and was attended by over 8,000 people. One of the most anticipated aspects of every Pokémon W.C. is the offering of an exclusive line of rare Pokémon merchandise at the event's stores"(Grossobel, 2020, Para. 11). Many Esports events happen year-round that brings in a lot of income to the industry. Esports, like many other industries, are still affected by Covid-19. The industry is growing but has lost revenue due to Covid-19.

The other issue with this growth is the mental effects it has taken on the populace. "Protracted periods of isolation, technology-based activity, and limited face-to-face interaction have the danger of solidifying unhealthy lifestyle patterns, intensifying technology-related disorders, and leading to difficulties in re-adaptation when the COVID-19 crisis has passed. A further concern is that, if some individuals may develop, increase, or relapse into unhealthy gaming patterns to relieve pandemic-related stress,

self-isolation restrictions may inhibit help-seeking and present barriers for those in treatment”(King & Delfabbro, 2020, Para. 3).

A pandemic can be a scary time, and the use of videogames and streaming can help alleviate the stress that comes with it. Some people can end up overusing videogames and streaming and lose themselves in the process. They can develop unhealthy behaviors, which can have negative effects on them post Covid-19. As much as the industry is growing unless people are able to participate in moderation, there will not be as many problems. The Esports industry, like other industries, has its good points and its bad points, but all can agree that it is an industry on the rise.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to explore the growing industry of Esports and what affects the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the industry. Covid-19 has caused a pandemic that has affected the whole world. This pandemic has caused many people to go into lockdown within their homes, rarely leaving unless for necessities. Due to people not leaving their homes, many industries have been forced to shut down for a period of time. The change in schedules has created more free time for people who usually work all day. With little to do stuck indoors, the world of Esports has opened up for many.

Covid-19 and the Esports industry, like many other industries, have been intertwined during this pandemic. Esports industry has been affected by the Esports industry. The Esports industry has had exponential growth due to most of the world being forced to go into lockdown indoors. Verizon reported an increase in gaming traffic during peak hours of 75%, compared to increases of 12% increase in digital video traffic and 20% in web traffic. Meanwhile, data from Streamlabs shows that platforms like Twitch, YouTube Gaming, and Facebook Gaming have also experienced a surge in growth, with around a 20% increase (Hall, 2020). This data shows the rise in Esports activities. Twitch, YouTube Gaming, and Facebook Gaming are popular streaming platforms used by professional Esport athletes while playing in competitions or practicing. These platforms allow athletes to interact with the community, which makes the industry more inclusive.

The COVID-19 lockdowns started in March, and the result can be seen within all the different platforms, especially Twitch increased from the previous usage from past months. This study initially stated that the Covid-19 Pandemic did not negatively affect

the Esports industry. While it did have positive effects on the industry, it was discovered that it did have some adverse effects. The Esports industry makes a lot of profit off in-person events, competitions, and advertising (Grossobel, 2020). The industry lost a part of its revenue, but once the world is able to handle large gatherings again, it will be able to gain that revenue back.

The future of any industry can be uncertain and unpredictable. All that can be done is to make educated predictions. The future of the Esports industry is bright post lockdowns. With the addition of offline revenue post-pandemic, the industry will be in a good situation going forward.

The potential earnings for the 2020 global games market were broken down for different gaming devices, such as mobile, PC, and console gaming. The projections are indicators for the potential growth going forward. Since lockdowns have been enforced, sports have been shut down. With the lack of sports, the Esports industry has been thrust into satisfying the need for sports. With this recent exposure to being nationally televised, the industry will become more normalized than traditional sports (Hall, 2020). The normalization of the industry will allow it to stand on an equal footing of traditional sports, which will enable it to grow even further.

The Esports industry is extremely enticing to many but can be too enticing for some. The pandemic has forced many indoors, which has created growth for the Esports industry, but some people may create bad habits. Pandemics are scary and can cause people to develop some bad habits to help them cope in this unprecedented time. People can start to use video games as an escape from the real world, and then after the pandemic passes, people may become isolated and fall into unhealthy patterns (King,



Delfabbro, 2020). Like many things in life, video games and watching Esports should be done in moderation to live a healthy and fulfilling life.

The future of this research should be conducted with how society changes after this pandemic and the further development of the Esports industry. With the increase of exposure indoors and people around the world learning to change their lifestyles, there may be a shift to more digital interactions and less in-person interactions. This shift can tell what is to come in the future and how Esports can become even more significant than traditional sports. Further research into the industry can show potential trends and how profitable the industry can be. The Esports industry is vast and profitable; it can be expected to be around for the near future.

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