'You've been in the house too long, she said, and I naturally fled'
An analysis of habitus among Danish e-sport players

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Abstract

Patterns in electronic sport (e-sport) have changed with increasing seriousness and professionalization in competitive activities, patterned behaviours, social structures and institutionalized settings. The aim of this study is to explore some Danish e-sport players' habitus of e-sport with a special focus on the significant amount of training taking place at home and individual identities displayed through e-sport. The basis for the study is 14 interviews, where seven players were interviewed twice, an in-depth interview at a competition event and a family interview in the players' home. The players have very similar embodied dispositions, traditions, beliefs, morals, values and ways of practising e-sport. The motivation for playing e-sport is not an internalization of a family norm, but happens in a social group context with friends. However, the findings also reveal that e-sport is perceived as a low status activity in a certain boy-culture, and e-sport has a special structured context and hierarchical relations with no unifying clubhouse or coaches involved, with most training and creation of social life taking place on-line from home, which also affects the intimate sociability of the home.

Key words: e-sport, habitus, leisure, identity, family interview, boy-culture, gaming

Introduction

Frey and Eitzen (1991) have described how traditional sport incorporates combinations of the serious with the frivolous, playfulness with intensity, and the ideological with the structural. So does electronic sport (or just e-sport), which is played by top-level professional teams as well as by individual amateurs. E-sport is on the rise worldwide, it is being incorporated into various systems of society, and, consequently, is beginning to resemble traditional sport. But e-sport differs from traditional sport in terms of both the social interaction and patterns in time and space. E-sport is competitive playing of video games, using digital media as an object for competition and employing avatars and mediated representations on the screen. Hutchins (2008) has already described how e-sport cannot be thought of in terms of media, sport or computer gaming, instead it is sport as media. This does not, however, mean that e-sport is antisocial performance. There is much social interaction while playing, which takes place both on the screen (in specific chat windows) and by verbal communication via headset technology, as well as more traditional face-to-face interactions at e-sport competition events.

Traditional sport can also be supplemented with digital media usage, but the main difference between traditional sport and e-sport is the fact that the majority of the events in e-sport occur only online and that training primarily takes place in a domestic context. This study is about practicing sport at home; challenging some e-sport players' perceptions and understandings of e-sport; and conveying family members' experiences of having one person in the household training up to 70 hours per week at home. This is also why the title refers to one verse from The Smiths' famous song from 1984, 'Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now'. Not only is e-sport 'a new social form' (Hutchins, 2008), it also gives some new implications for the surroundings within its social reality when training and the clubhouse is located in a teenager's room or the family living room.

There are many different game genres and platforms within competitive video gaming. The most common video game genres in e-sport are strategy, first-person shooter, multiplayer online battle arena, role playing games, fighting games, racing, and sports (e.g., FIFA and NHL). E-sport seems to get closer to traditional sports domains by being increasingly institutionalized and commercialized (Taylor, 2012), and is prensently in a process of increasing seriousness and professionalization,

with an increased number of players, prize pools, sponsors, spectators and fan cultures. South Korea has been one of the driving forces behind e-sport, and in 2005 the first e-sport stadium opened in Seoul. The stadium is designed specifically for online professional gaming. In South Korea, dedicated 24-hour cable-TV game channels regularly televise electronic sport events. A symbol of the recognition of e-sport in Asia could be seen when two famous e-sport players (one from China and one from South Korea) carried the Olympic torch through China en route to the Beijing National Stadium at the Olympics in 2008. But there is ongoing debate whether e-sport can be truly described as a sport or not, and the question of whether e-sport can be an event at the Olympics has also been considered. The International e-Sports Federation (IeSF) is working to ensure that e-sport is accredited as any other sport.

The aim of this study is however not to state whether or not e-sport can be included within the definition of sport or not, nor if e-sport is suited for the Olympics. The definition of sport is commonly discussed (Bourdieu, 1978; Coakley, 2007; Delayney and Madigan, 2009; Eichberg, 2003; Eitzen, 2006; Guttmann, 2007; Nixon and Frey, 1996; Woods, 2011), and the now almost classic question whether e-sport is sport or not has been thoroughly penetrated (Jonasson and Thiborg, 2010; Mora and Héas, 2003; Taylor, 2012; Witkowski, 2010; 2012). Instead, throughout this article I will argue that e-sport challenges some traditional perceptions and understanding of sports' ontologies, and not just because of the widely debated degree of physical elements or mediated representations in e-sport (Hutchins, 2008; Taylor, 2012; Witkowski, 2012). There might be an even more complex perspective, which not yet has been given much focus, namely the significant amount of training taking place at home—in the household itself surrounded by family members or girlfriends/boyfriends. The research question for this study is 'what kind of habitus is connected to e-sport?' The aim is to look at some micro-level topics, including individual identities displayed through e-sport. Of course processes of globalization, commercialization and professionalization influence e-sport; but very few studies have taken up the micro-level within e-sport, and very few studies have focused on practicing sports at home.

Previous research within e-sport

There has been a number of research studies into e-sport, which have focused on some of the major international tournaments (Hutchins, 2008; Janz and Martens, 2005; Trepte, Reinecke and Juechems, 2012). Hutchins (2008) analyzed the World Cyber Games (a small-scale Olympics of international competitive gaming) from a sociological perspective, and concluded that e-sport can be seen as a sign of meta-change in the global age of a second modernity. In a participant-observer case study of video-game players, Conway (2010) emphasized the social form, and discussed the social meta-game as being enacted between participants to barter social status, social capital and specific gamer capital. There has also been a number of scholars claiming that e-sport is a sport with regard to physicality and competitiveness. Mora and Héas (2003) highlighted the body-efficiency of gamers, the competitive aspects and the institutionalization of e-sport. Taylor has put much effort into the classical question whether e-sport is a sport or not, and her main argument is: 'In the same way traditional sports shape embodied action, elite computer game play also inscribes itself on the body of players, refining over time the most nuanced yet complex circuits of action' (Taylor, 2012:39). Similar arguments can be found in Witkowski (2012) with the conclusion that playing Counter-Strike is physically demanding in order to be competitive in the high-performance game.

Theoretical framework: Habitus and leisure

As Bourdieu's work also focused on leisure dispositions (Bourdieu, 1984; 1990; 1991), 'and how it constructs and reinforces existing social position and power relations' (Lee et al., 2014:315), several scholars have already described (and analytically used) the link between the theoretical framework within leisure and Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Haycock and Smith, 2014; Jakobsson et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2014; Skille and Solbakken, 2014). In this case habitus is a system of dispositions that are embedded in the e-sport players' minds and bodies through their experiences of social situations and collective memories that determine the players' ways of moving, thinking, acting, and their perspective on normative impact, judgments and classifications. For a very short explanation, habitus in this study should be understood as the e-sport players' understanding

of the world. But the epistemology of habitus is rather complex and can be difficult to operationalize analytically. E-sport players' understanding of the world contains both conscious and unconscious ideological and normative assumptions. This understanding develops in interactions within practices of positions (e.g., parents, girl/boyfriends and other players within the field of e-sport) and the position taken in terms of how e-sport is embedded in organizational structures (e.g., number of players per team, tournament structures, etc.), from which the individual players might gain forms of social, cultural, economic and symbolic capital.

Bourdieu (1984) describes habitus as both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgments and the system of classification of these practices. Bourdieu's epistemology of habitus must also be seen in conjunction with his theoretical concepts of field and capital (Bourdieu, 1984). In *Distinction*, Bourdieu constructed the formula [(habitus)(capital)] + field = practice] (Bourdieu, 1984:101), but like other researchers (e.g., Crossley, 2001; Giulianotti, 2005; Reed-Danahay, 2005) I agree that Bourdieu is unclear in this formula, and there is 'ontological complicity' (Giulianotti, 2005:157) between the terms. As Giulianotti (2005) writes 'habitus is a form of subjectivity, but a socialized one; the field is an objective construct constituted by contested relations between social actors' (Giulianotti, 2005:157).

There is a sizeable body of literature within sociological theory about leisure in a sport context. But very few have made the link between e-sport and leisure. Carlsson (2010), though, makes the link between e-sport (what he labels digital sport) and leisure activities, and claims that it constitutes both institutionalized and controlled social spheres, and some uncontrolled unrestricted digital spaces where especially boys spend time at home joining e-sport. Taylor (2012) also makes the link between e-sport and leisure but from a macro perspective and notes that 'the cultural constructions of leisure identity influence how people take up and inhabit gamer culture, or not' (Taylor, 2012:245). But one of the critical points is that leisure is often described as antithetical to work, as taking place during free or spare time with recreation, relaxation, enjoyment or pleasure (Hunnicutt, 2005). I agree with other scholars' (Perry and Rachovides, 2007; Shannon, 2006) criticism towards this understanding of leisure. As Perry and Rachovides (2007) describe it, leisure is not exclusively about fun, excitement, engagement or action. Sometimes leisure activities are just about being there, participation due to membership in a social group, or a goal to be reached in the long run. It is also

worth noting that enjoying leisure activities also happens in interplay in everyday (family) life, and includes some skills to adopt the activity such as the ability to identify, access, plan and successfully participate in activities.

Often leisure activities are described within a component of social identity as a group. Ellemers, Kortekaas and Ouwerkerk (1999) use Henri Tajfel's leisure theory to describe how leisure consists of a cognitive component (cognitive awareness of one's membership in a social group), an evaluative component (positive or negative value connotation attached to group membership) and an emotional component (sense of emotional involvement with the group). To distinguish sophisticated and demanding forms of leisure from their more casual counterparts, Stebbins (1982) described and defined three types of serious leisure: amateurism, hobbyist pursuits and career volunteering. Many scholars have later described that these activities provide venues for meeting otherwise unmet social psychological needs in contemporary society, serving as an escape hatch from more constraining social contexts and roles (Hunt, 2008; Kimmel, 1996), whereas others have described serious leisure within cultures of commitment (Tomlinson, 1993), or as a basis for identity creation and affirmation (Haggard and Williams, 1992). Scholars have also noted that a huge investment of money, time and identity in intensive activities can create conflicts within other institutions and in the family (Gillespie et al., 2002; Stalp, 2006).

Methods

The basis for this article is 14 interviews (seven players interviewed twice). The seven e-sport players were recruited at a Danish e-sport tournament called SLAP Live (a national LAN event with more than 1,000 participants) using purposive sampling within non-probability sampling methods. The purposive sampling was used in order to ensure that the players displayed certain attributes, which was a maximum age of 22 and primarily competing in the game 'Counterstrike' (a first person shooter game), as well as to ensure a distribution of players from different parts of the country.

The e-sport players were interviewed twice, both at the SLAP Live tournament (with an in-depth interview) and in their home (using a family interview). All players were between 16 and 22 years old and they

played e-sport at different levels. The vast majority of e-sport players are males, which is the reason why the study is primarily based on males. Both the in-depth interview at the tournament and the family interview in the players' private homes were based on a semi-structured interview guide with questions arranged in themes. The themes were the same for both interviews: 1) general background information; 2) e-sport and training; 3) e-sport as sport; 4) players, fan-culture, elite vs. amateur; and 5) the future. But the questions within the themes were framed differently depending on the different interview contexts. At the in-depth interview the questions were directed towards each individual player, and the aim was to obtain answers that could give in-depth information about their dispositions and there experience within e-sport. At the family interview the questions were directed at all members of the household who participated in the interview. The form of the questions was asked in a more narrative way to take advantage of how family members remembered their common shared past and future, and how they negotiated it within their different viewpoints.

The two different interview contexts and formats provide a nuanced picture of the e-sport players' habitus, where especially the family interview could challenge some of the players' 'stories' about themselves, thereby providing different views and opinions about e-sport. Great care was taken not to point out contradictions, and to make clear that neither agreement nor disagreement was required during the family interview. It was important that all family members understood the questions (e.g., there was in some of the interviews huge age differences, as well as some technical terms within e-sport). All interviews took place in 2011/2012, and in order to analyze the interview data, a method of meaning condensation was used (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009), where the transcribed interviews were analyzed by looking for natural meaning units and explicating their main themes. These themes were then subject to more extensive interpretations and theoretical analyses. To protect the identity of all participants, the names used are not participants' real names.

TABLE 1: *Interviewed players, household structure, sport, level and hours of training*

Name of player	Age	Household members participating in the family interview	Other traditional sports	Region	Hours of training per week/ level
Steven	18	Girlfriend	No	Jutland, South	50+/Semi-professional
Peter	22	Living alone	Football, handball	Sealand	40/Amateur
Simon	18	Father, Mother	Football, Gym	Sealand	35+/Amateur
Daniel	16	Father, Mother	Table tennis	Fynen	70/Amateur
Ben	20	Mother	No	Jutland, East	40+/Amateur
Michael	22	Girlfriend	Gym	Sealand, Copenhagen	40+/Semi-professional
Karen	21	Living alone	Gym/ Yoga	Jutland, East	30/ Amateur

Peter, Steven, Michael and Karen lived in their own apartments, and Steven and Michael both had a girlfriend living with them in the apartments as well. Besides playing e-sport, Michael, Daniel, Simon, Peter and Karen were, at the time of the study, members of different sports clubs or fitness centres, doing a variety of sports besides e-sport. The selected e-sport players came from different areas in Denmark and played between 30–70 hours per week (subjective self-estimation).

Influence, identity and low status

Kraaykamp et al. (2012) describe how extremely difficult it is to determine how strongly parents'/partners' influence sports activities of their children/partners. Throughout the literature there are also some very different and contradictory findings (Kraaykamp et al., 2012). Green et al. (2005) conclude that in families where parents themselves are active sportsmen, more 'love of sports' is exhibited and sports participation will be a family norm. But in this case e-sport is not an internalization of the family norm. In fact there are no parents or players' girlfriends that 'love computer gaming' (although all have tried computer gaming, but not

in a competition context), nor is any one of them active in traditional sports. When the players explain how they got into e-sport they all have some common history. All seven interviewed players conveyed that their interest in e-sport developed in interplay and reciprocal actions with influences outside the family, and took place especially together with friends and/or within a youth club context.

> I went into a computer café together with some friends, just to try it. And from that day I was hooked. Now I play around 5 hours per day. (Simon, age 18: In-depth interview)

> I started to play in a youth club, and then it has just expanded. (Daniel, age 16: In-depth interview)

The point of engagement and when the interviewed players were 'hooked' on e-sport took place in a social group context, often together with friends. There is no doubt that e-sport consists of components of a social identity, and much like other kinds of sports, e-sport functions as cultural capital, but in this case in a reversed sense since most parents and the players' girlfriends perceive e-sport as a low status sport:

> My parents think it is stupid. (Simon, age 18: In-depth interview)

> I must admit that I quite don't understand it. It's not something I grew up with, and not something which is on television like tennis and football… it's very difficult to be professional in e-sport because there is no prestige in it. (Simon's father, age 51: Family interview)

> They are just… seated on a chair eating candy and chips and drinking soda and playing computer games. (Steven's girlfriend, age 19: Family interview)

> We would rather that Daniel played more table tennis than e-sport also because table tennis is more physical. I don't like him being seated so many hours in front of the computer playing these violent games…I don't understand it, but well it is his big interest, so of course we also support him in this. (Daniel's mother, age 41: Family interview).

Among parents and partners there are some negative perceptions linked to e-sport (e.g., unhealthy, chips, candy, soda, violent games, no prestige, not recognized). For them e-sport is not considered as something that holds high esteem or prestige in society, and the reason for this low status is highlighted when they explicitly express how most people in society (including themselves) do not have the knowledge or experience

to understand, appreciate or enjoy e-sport. However, within the e-sport community itself some of the players have high status, and in some cultures some players are in fact regarded as having high status. Almost all players explained how big e-sport is in Asia and especially in South Korea, where some of the professional players live as rock stars and are associated with vast fan cultures, media coverage and general appreciation. The players express envy towards the perceived higher status of e-sport in South Korea. The low status understanding from parents and girlfriends is not only because of lack of experience or appreciation; it can also be traced to public discussions about whether e-sport is a real sport. It is very clear that all the family members argue that e-sport is not a sport because of the missing physical element, and some of the parents also point to the same argument as Daniel's father (age 42): 'e-sport is not sport, there is no physical activity, as well as chess is not sport either'. The players, though, found that there are many similarities with traditional sport and e-sport, including that e-sport is also rather physically demanding:

> It is very physical to play e-sport, you have to concentrate really hard, so it demands lots of stamina…e-sport also requires quick reflexes. (Michael, age 22: In-depth interview)

> You need a good wrist and stamina, but also fast reactions and good coordination. But it is also important to be fit and rested before important competitions. (Peter, age 22: In-depth interview)

The players perceive that e-sport demands fine motor skills. These comments, as well as Witkowski's previous studies in 2010 and 2012, reveal that the body during e-sport games is present and visible within its repertoire of coordination (especially eye/hand/speaking coordination), concentration (making the right decision under great pressure and after several hours of playing), creativity (to predict what the opponent is going to do), and reaction (react fast).

Almost all the players understood e-sport as real sport due to its physical and competitive elements, the tournaments, rules and team play, and the tactical team meetings before a game. The players identified one of the key elements of both sport and e-sport as competition—it is all about winning or losing. But the players also indicate that it is a fight for much more than just the first prize. It is also about getting appreciation and acclaim for their performance, which they perceive primarily is happening internally, within the e-sport community, not extended to the general public. The only player who did not perceive e-sport as sport was Peter.

His argument was not based on physical elements or rules, but because of the lack of acceptance by society:

> No, I would not call e-sport sport. I would call it an activity. Before it becomes a sport I think it must be more accepted among other people and in society. In South Korea it is a real sport, where the players are treated like rock stars and the government invests in e-sport. (Peter, age 22: In-depth interview)

Peter's statement draws on cultural settings or what Bourdieu would call 'the constitution of a field' (Bourdieu, 1978: 821). Peter's attitude is that e-sport is not accepted by a majority in society, which also includes the political level. This is similar to what Bourdieu emphasizes when he stated that sport is 'an area of production, endowed with its own logic and its own history' (Bourdieu, 1978:821).

E-sport played at home

Even though playing e-sport is not fixed to a specific place, the majority of time spent on playing takes place in the home. The home still implies a place of leisure time (Kelly, 1997) in a private setting and is 'produced through an intersection between the human agency of creative imaginative individuals and their engagements and/or negotiations with their everyday environments including the material, social, media sensory and other agencies of their everyday lives' (Pink, 2004:79). There is no doubt that having one person spending many hours in the home setting on his/her amateur sport incorporates and implies some expressed everyday negotiations and potential boundaries:

> My parents wanted me to go out more. That was also why I started to participate in competition events, so I could be more sociable. They would like me to go out more and away from my own room. (Michael, age 22: In-depth interview)

> My parents definitely think that I spend too much time on e-sport. They would like it if I came out and helped with everything, and did more of my homework as well. Well, maybe I am playing too much. I play around 10 hours per day. (Daniel, age 16: In-depth interview)

E-sport provides an implicit and explicit structure for the players' lives in relation to both time and space. The structure of time and the timeta-

bling of everyday life is also a big concern to the other family members, who feel they spend too much time on e-sport:

> In the beginning I was very sceptical, but after you started to win cups and prizes it is better. But too many damn hours are spent on it. Your parents also agree on this. (Steven's girlfriend, age 19: Family interview)

It is not unusual to have special agreements and negotiations if young people spend a lot of time doing their sport. But there are some very special issues with playing e-sport, which have something to do with the structure of space and the relation between staying at home as opposed to going out and playing football (to mention but one legitimate pastime in the cultural sphere within which the study was conducted). This means that the players are not sociable in their approach to other members of the household (e.g., by providing assistance), even though they are physically present in the household. But these issues are also rather complex. As Steven's girlfriend mentioned, 'too many damn hours are spent on it', but at the same time there are also appreciations for the cups and prizes Steven wins. In general, there is appreciation for personal effort, and the players' extensive skills, knowledge and experience, which is also some of the characteristics of a serious leisure participant as Stebbins (1996) has described.

However, from this study it is also clear that the family members accept, support and allow the players' interest in e-sport, although some parents try to turn their children away from e-sport to other more recognized sports. The structure of both time and space in playing e-sport is associated with significant opportunities and restrictions. In very different ways, family members/partners express both ambitions for and concerns regarding the structure of their children's/boyfriends' e-sport interest. The issue of e-sport in the household is also related to age and the management of relations between childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Parents will allow their children to join e-sport if they in addition playing manage to get good grades at school. In general, all family members felt that their child/boyfriend spent too much time and attention on e-sport and that it affects the intimate sociability of the home; on the other hand, they also stressed that it is good to have an interest and something that the player is really motivated by and dedicated to.

The absent clubhouse and adult domination

E-sport differs from many other sports domains as most organization does not take place within a sports club and there are no coaches for instruction and support. A sports club is a core element in many sports and 'is a situation, similar to the family and school, dominated by perspectives of adults', and the coach relation can provide a 'structured context and a hierarchical relationship' (Claringbould et al., 2014). All of the interviewed e-sport players mentioned the lack of sports clubs and coaches in e-sport as a disadvantage, with poor team organization and leadership.

> There are lots of problems with too many players jumping in and out. What is missing is some kind of contract or agreements. It is way too easy to jump from one team to another, which means it is very difficult to maintain a stable team. (Simon, age 18: In-depth interview)

> The problem is the so-called clan jumpers. It is difficult to recruit good new players on the team. You need to know the person pretty well before the team starts to play seriously. There are many elements for recruiting a new player, it is not only about if he plays good, it is also about keeping discipline and appointments. It would be nice to have a coach for deciding on which team the person should play and to keep the discipline. (Steven, age 18: In-depth interview)

The amateur teams recruit their own players for the team in a self-organized way and have some problems doing it. Steven mentioned rather explicitly how it would be nice not being part of the recruitment process for new players. Another issue is the lack of knowledge and support, where Steven could see the coach as a kind of an expert, who knows what to do and gives adult instruction. On the other hand, self-organized teams give individual players a rather reflexive view of their strengths and weaknesses as they internally evaluate and negotiate their performances, meaning that no coach is telling them what to do and how to do it. All players need to be rather active in decision-making or reflection about further improvement. In other words, the players develop their dispositions by constructing values based on their own experiences and performances in a necessary reflexive way. They are their own coaches.

This might also be the reason for some of the problems and conflicts within the teams as it can be difficult for individual teams to set and maintain values and discipline for other players, who are at the same hierarchical level. Also, the teams have to set standards internally for the

balance between fun and improvement, rewards and punishment, different motivation for playing and how successful the team would like to be. Simon mentions a contract that each individual player should sign to have clear and visible norms and values but also to have clear practices for rewards and punishments if a player lacks discipline. Instead of a coach the teams have a team leader (called 'attack leader' in e-sport), and he/she is responsible for tactics and strategies during the game, and is the one communicating this to the other team players.

The boy-culture

Karen was the only female player in the study. It was difficult to find a female and even more difficult to find one who volunteered to be interviewed. During the interviews with Karen, some interesting elements within her habitus were described.

> E-sport is a boy culture. But I like it. It was more difficult in the beginning because there were lots of gamers who didn't believe that I was a girl, or they came with some comments as 'hi hottie'. But now I am used to it, and it is also very funny to beat the boys. They get extra frustrated because I am girl. But for sure I would like more girls in e-sport. (Karen, age 21: In-depth interview)

This habitus is similar to what Taylor et al. (2009) found in their study involving the e-sport community, where some view female participation in sexualized terms, just as Karen experienced the 'hi hottie' greeting. Karen participates in a set of practices of competitive gaming, framed as a domain of males, which might be the reason why they get extra frustrated when beaten. This might also be explained by social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), which states that self-efficacy beliefs, or people's judgments of their capabilities to behave in certain ways, provide the foundation for motivation and personal accomplishment. What Karen is saying implicitly is that boys believe that they can beat her (with a positive outcome for themselves or their teams), which is the reason why they engage in competition with her in the first place, but these self-efficacy beliefs are also the reason they become extra frustrated. It would be too ambitious within the framework of this article to go into the complex and conflicting research about masculine hegemony, and male/female athletes' relationships with others. Karen perceives e-sport

as a 'boy-culture', but it can't be displayed within the muscular body as the competition takes place online. The body is not visible and the physical is primarily expressed by fine motor skills and by putting mind over body. Karen's perception of boy-culture in e-sport might be related to the majority of players being male and the bonds between the (boy) players on the teams. In addition, the interviewed male players point out understandings within stereotyped leisure activities:

> In the competitions the girls can't quite follow. They also have their own tournaments, which is kind of weird because there are no physical limitations. It's a mind sport. (Michael, age 22: Family interview)

Michael points out that the male players (for the time being) are more skilled than the female players. Computer gaming is often stereotyped as a male activity, and research has shown that males within a first person shooter game, like 'Counterstrike', the focus for this study, making negative comments gain more success with friend requests than males who make positive comments; the opposite is true for comments from females (Ivory et al., 2014).

Conclusion and discussion

E-sport has become very important for the interviewed players. Even though each individual player of e-sport is equipped with a habitus and constructs his or her own image of the world, the players have very similar embodied dispositions in common – traditions, beliefs, morals, values and ways of practising e-sport. This can be described as what Bourdieu called group habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) or what Stebbins (1996) within leisure theory labels as a unique social world. The competitions, conditions, atmosphere and especially the social element (both on-line and physical meetings) are essential and a great motivating factor for e-sport players, and it was also a main factor for being engaged in the sport when initially started. The object used for playing e-sport is the computer, but it is not only an object since it creates a social life and enables meaningful interactions to be conducted, which take place not only on the screen but in a very physical (face-to-face) context at different tournaments. At the same time it also affects the intimate sociability of the home because the home setting is where players spend most of their time playing. There are negotiations within the everyday life family norm with specific focus on

the players' structure of time and space for the highly time consuming leisure activity of e-sport.

Among parents and the players' girlfriends, e-sport is linked to negative perceptions and considered a low status activity, due to a lack of knowledge, understanding or enjoyment of e-sport. Additionally, none of them recognize e-sport as a sport, using the argument of a lack of physical activity. In spite of the perceived negative values and low status ascribed to e-sport, they all accept and support their child/boyfriend in joining the game, and they express both ambitions for and concerns about the structuring of the players' daily lives. Some of the players have high status within the e-sport community, but all players would also like more appreciation from the outside world. All players (except one) understand e-sport as a real sport because they perceive it as physically demanding in tems of fine motor skills.

All players mentioned the absence of organized sports clubs and coaches as a disadvantage. But it also gives self-organized teams a rather reflexive view of their own strengths and weakness. Besides these cognitive and evaluative components, the teams also have to deal with emotional issues internally, where members' team conflicts are perceived as a continual problem.

E-sport is not an isolated practice, nor is it one-dimensional and objective. It is a complex phenomenon within a schizophrenic zone between sport, media and social network computing. Further consideration should be given and research undertaken into the role of the computer as an object in the construction of sport. Further research into the understanding and definition of the term 'physicality' is needed; that is, into how body knowledge and body engagement can be measured, and how to make comparisons between coordination and concentration, and thus challenge the attitudes about what can be considered as sport. Furthermore, the apparent perceived boy-culture and lack of appreciation from society could be given more focus within the e-sport context.

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