Computer Games Phenomenon among Adolescents, And their Perception as a Tool for Gratifying of/

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Abstract

In the last decade computer game playing has become a popular activity in our life and especially among youngsters. The goal of the present research to examine the phenomenon of computer game playing and it's extent among adolescents in the city of Ariel (in Israel), while refereeing to the differences between the sexes. And also to examine whether there is a justification for the apprehension and claims that computer games can cause damage to children, or maybe they have the ability for gratifying certain needs that emerge through adolescent years.

The research examine the subsequent hypothesis:

- Computer game phenomena spread among most adolescents in one amount or another, but there will be different between boys and girls, boys tend to play more than girls do. However, in spite of that phenomena is widespread among adolescents, there is no relation between the social situation of the adolescents and their tendency to play by computer gams, most adolescents prefer to spent their leisure time with a human friend. Moreover there is no reason to be concerned from becoming addicting to computer game amongst most of the teenagers, there are other activities that occupied them in their free time besides playing computer game.
- Most adolescents find computer game satisfied certain needs, but the different between boys and girls will emerge also regarding to this question - boys and girls will percept different needs as satisfied by computer game. It might be a connection between the adolescent social condition and "the need of friend"- isolated adolescent may find computer game as a substituted for human friend. There is a relation between the amount of tendency to play computer game and the amount of percept it as a need satisfying. This tendency increases by computer game "addicts".

- The rate of "addicted" to computer game playing is relatively low compare to whole population, but they have special characteristics regarding these questions.

The findings confirm these hypotheses. Most adolescents, boys and girls, are playing computer games in one extent or another, but this tendency is stronger in boys than girls. Both, "solitary" and "sociable " tend to play almost in the same extent, and they both preferred to be with "human friend" rather than "electronic friend". This data raises strong relation between solitude in school and "computer game love" this finding distinguish especially in girls that they don't have friends and they play computer games in the recess. However, in spite of this phenomenon, most of adolescent participate in other leisure activities, and does not reveal a tendency of addiction to computer game playing.

Most adolescent percept needs as satisfying by computer game playing, the most distinguish needs were "control", "challenge" and "achieve", after them were the need of "escape and relax" and the need to experience reality in a non threatening way - "the need of reality substitute". Previous works also find these needs satisfied by computer games and they reflect the confusion and conflicts of adolescent world. As opposed to, the "need of identity" was low in both genders, especially in girls. Another significant findings were found, in favorite of the boys, only regarding to "the need to escape and relax" and "the need of social appreciation" - boys percept these needs as satisfied by computer game match more then girls. Usually, boys were found computer game more satisfying then girls, bat regarding to the other needs the differences were minor.

The rate of "addicted" was relatively low, but the results regarding to computer game playing were deferent. "Addicts" spend more time playing computer game, and find them more satisfying. Interestingly, while the need of identity was minor in all samples, it was significantly strong within "addicts" even more than other needs.

The gap between the gender compare to all population, was decrease regarding to some needs ("the need to control", and "the need of challenge", but decrease regarding to other needs ("the need to escape and relax" and "the need of reality substitute"). Regarding to "the need of friendship" the findings were opposed to all population. While in all population boys were found this need more satisfying by computer games then girls, between "edicts" the gap decrees largely, only this time in favor of the girls - the "edict" girls percept computer game as human friend more then "edict" boys.

There were no differences regarding age, although younger adolescents find a little more satisfaction while playing computer game then the eldest.

This research accomplished in the city of Ariel, which has unique characteristics in the computer area, that is why it's recommended performing similar research in other area in Israel. As "Wise City" Ariel has special characteristics - all public institution, including schools and public library are connected to the Internet and to the city intra-net, in the future privets houses will intend to be connect also.

The city concentrate in computers in education, creates virtual communities and computer communication to serve all sorts of needs of her inhabitants

The research population consists of 293 adolescents (147 boys and 146 girls) that live and learn in the city of Ariel.

The pupils filled out a questionnaire, which divided to two parts; one part was intended for all population in purpose to get information abut the computer game phenomena and its relation with the adolescents social situation. The second part was meant to be filled by those 269 adolescents how love to play computer game in one extend or another. This part includes question about their habits of playing, and their perception of computer games as a tool for gratifying psychosocial needs.

Because the lake of research in this subject, a new questionnaire was built, based on pre test and parts of existing works that examine what motivates adolescent to play with computer game, and which needs, they felt, can be satisfied by computer game.

This research is primary in Israel and as such it raises another question that put the platform to additional research; what is the phenomenon extent in other groups of the population, and what needs does the computer game satisfies for them? Is it possible to plan specific computer games that can fit these special needs? What is the parents opinion toward this phenomena, and what is the connection between this attitude, and extend to which their children addicted to computer games? Are certain computer game satisfies certain needs? And if they are, how their special characters, and the attraction towards them, can be used as a tool by librarians, and in the future by social information, for guiding and support in time of stress, crisis and transition period, like they do with books?

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