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Strategy Video Games

General Analysis

History and Social Impact

Strategy video games is a very popular genre in gaming. Strategy games first originated with traditional board games such as Chess. It first moved into video games with the release of Invasion in 1972 for the Magnavox Odyssey, a very old console. Today, strategy video games are booming. There are millions of players actively playing for their own enjoyment, and even people playing strategy video games for a living. As of August 2018, League of Legends was reported to have around 111 million active players playing on a monthly basis. This is just one of the larger strategy video games and there are still millions of strategy video game players playing different games.

One person making a living off of strategy video games is League of Legends professional player, Lee Sang-hyeok, known in game as Faker. According to Dot Esports, Faker is rumored to be making around 4.6 million dollars annually in the year of 2018. On top of his massive annual income, it is estimated by EsportsEarnings that Faker has earned over 1.2 million dollars in winnings throughout his career as a professional League of Legends player. The fact

that there are millions of players actively playing strategy video games, with the best players earning millions of dollars doing so, shows how impactful these types of video games can be to a person's quality of life.

When looking at the psychological effects of strategy video games, there seems to be a correlation with strategy video games. The article, "Uncovering the association between strategy video games and self-regulation: A correlational study" talks about this through some research that was done. There was a study done using the Amazon Mechanical Turk web platform to find the relationship between strategy video games and self regulation. There were two attempts at this study. In the first attempt, the study was done with no specific attributes to a person besides age and gender. For the second attempt, there was a look at people's personality traits and personal preferences. After the first attempt, "As expected, amount of strategy video game play was positively correlated with self-regulation ($r = 0.17$).", *Alessandro Gabbiadini, Tobias Greitemeyer, "Uncovering the association between strategy video games and self-regulation: A correlational study", p. 3*. This shows that after doing the study, they found that people who play strategy video games have a positive linear correlation of .17 to self regulation. This is a good sign as it shows that strategy games can have a good effect on the minds of people.

For the second attempt, there was a look at people's personality traits and personal preferences. This included overall frequency video game play, avoidance of temptations, need for cognition, and a lot more. Once again, there was a positive correlation between the two. "Replicating Study 1, amount of strategy video game play was positively associated with self-regulation ($r = 0.18$)." and "As expected, avoidance of temptations was significantly associated with self-regulation, as well as need for cognition and impulsiveness, whereas risk

taking and satisfaction with life were not.”, *Alessandro Gabbiadini, Tobias Greitemeyer, “Uncovering the association between strategy video games and self-regulation: A correlational study”, p. 6*. After this attempt, there was a very slight increase in positive correlation at .18, compared to the .17 that was shown in study 1. Furthermore, it was learned that personal traits did affect a person during this study. A person’s avoidance of temptations, their need for cognition and impulsiveness was shown to greatly affect the results of this study. However, risk taking and satisfaction with life did not affect it very much.

The point that strategy video games help the mind of a person was further discussed in a different article. They also used an experiment with highschoolers to see how strategy video games affected the students. “Sustained strategic video game play significantly predicted the slope of self-reported problem solving, $b = .18$, 95 % CI [.02, .34], $p < .05$, such that participants who reported higher sustained strategic video game play also reported steeper increases in self-reported problem solving scores over time than participants who indicated less sustained strategic video game play” *Paul J. C. Adachi, Teena Willoughby, “More Than Just Fun and Games: The Longitudinal Relationships Between Strategic Video Games, Self-Reported Problem Solving Skills, and Academic Grades”, p. 6*. This shows that strategy games not only help with self regulation, but also help with problem solving. This just adds on to the different effects that strategy games can have on a person's life.

The social impact strategy games can bring is immense. Some people like Lee Sang-hyeok can make a more than average living off of these games. On top of that, casual players still have a great benefit to playing these games. Not only can people like myself use it to wind down after a long day, it is proven, with the experiments mentioned previously, to help our

minds with self regulation and problem solving. While a lot of people think video games are a waste of time, these experiments prove them wrong. This is a hobby that can help the best players make a career off of gaming, while also helping casual players sharpen their minds.

Usually there is a backlash towards the gaming community by older people such as your parents or teachers. It feels as if it comes from their own mind and if they took the time to even give the gaming community a chance, they could also see the social benefits it can bring.

Discourse Community

The discourse community for strategy video games generally falls under the gaming genre. However, strategy video games can have it's own discourse community since this sub-genre is so large. The members in a strategy video game community have the common goal of working together as a team to get to the end goal of the specific strategy game. Whether it be destroying the enemy team or getting more points than the enemy team, it is a common goal shared between them.

Another common goal is helping other members to win as much as possible, even if they're not playing with each other. Since these are video games, communication is usually done over a microphone or chat, depending on which one is offered for the specific game. If community members want to discuss anything while not inside the game, they can always use the strategy video games forum pages such as Reddit or public chats on applications like Discord. They can use this to, as previously said, help other members win as much as possible. This can be done to give tips, introduce new tactics or game mechanics, or even meet other

players. There's also a lot of game clubs that you can use to meet other players playing the same game as you. City Tech has its own e-sports club, for example.

This discourse community also has its own sub-genres which would be the different types of strategy video games that are available. There's all sorts of different strategy video games. It can be League of Legends, Clash Royale, Starcraft, and so much more. The thing about strategy video games is that it's so broad. You probably might think some games aren't strategy but it really does need strategy to play at a higher level. For example, Overwatch looks like a normal first person shooter game at first glance. However, the top players all use strategy to help them win. They can decide which characters to use, how many supports, tanks, and damage dealers they want on their team composition to execute the game plan they have in mind. They also have to be smart about changing their characters in the middle of a game to help their team win. Since this is a first person shooter, there's also the strategy side of it of knowing when to push for an objective and when to defend your own. As you can see, strategy video games can go into so many different games. You can play a lot of different games and be a part of this discourse community so you don't have to feel restricted to any specific games when joining this discourse community. As long as you're open to trying different games and having an open mind to learning different tactics needed to succeed, this discourse community can be for you.

Focused Analysis

League of Legends

League of Legends is currently the most popular MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena), a subgenre to real time strategy games. According to Business Insider, during October

2019, League of Legends had the most hours watched on streaming platform Twitch at 125.65 million. This is a huge game worldwide with there being professional leagues in different regions. The professional side of this game expands to regions such as North America, Europe, China, and Korea, to name a few of the more popular regions. Every year they even have a world event, similar to the Olympics where different regions compete with each other. Teams represent their entire region so players take pride in being able to participate. According to Dot Esports, the League of Legends Worlds event in 2019 peaked at 44 million viewers worldwide. League of Legends is a video game known worldwide.

Rules and Messages

In this game, League of Legends, each player controls one character they choose at the start of the game. There are five players and five different roles for each player in a game. The different roles are the Top Laner where the player spends most of his time playing at the top side of the map, the Jungler who plays within the jungle between each laner, the Mid Laner who plays at the middle of the map, the ADC (Attack Damage Carry) who shares the bot side of the map with the fifth role, the Support who main purpose is to well, support the team. League of Legends has 148 different champions to choose and each role has a different set of champions that are considered viable to play in their role.

When in game, the five players are trying to work together with the similar goal of clearing objectives throughout the map before the enemy team of five clear them first. The main goal is to destroy the enemy base but it is blocked by smaller objectives like towers. There are

also other objectives such as killing a dragon that give more power to a player which helps them fight off the enemy team and get closer to destroying their base.

The game is also based around gold income which is used to buy different items. These items give you stats that help you fight the enemy team. Gold income is earned through different ways. You already have a passive income that you earn throughout the game. However this passive income is insignificant so you need to do other things to earn gold. This includes killing enemy champions, destroying enemy towers, and killing non player characters such as minions or jungle monsters. The goal is to earn more gold than the enemy team to give yourself and team an edge when you fight the enemy team. You are trying to make decisions as a team to earn the most gold so you can fight off the enemy and destroy their base. You can play this game in normal mode, where it's casual and people are playing just for fun or you can hop into ranked games, where you move up ranks after winning some games. There are nine different tiers of ranks with Iron being the lowest and Challenger being the highest.

League of Legends Guide

When playing strategy games, there are always different paths you can take when playing the game. League of Legends is a broad game with tons of different champions to play and tons of different items to build. It can be confusing to some players as to which champions to play and which items are most compatible with them. The game changes, where League of Legends adds new champions or items and gives buffs or nerfs to current champions. The term buff is used as a replacement to making something stronger, while the term nerf is used as a replacement to making something weaker. During each patch, League of Legends brings in these

changes and people like to learn what the new best champions and playstyles are. Whether it be low ranked players trying to learn from better players, or people already at the higher ranks looking for an insight from someone else on these new changes. People use all sorts of ways to communicate these changes such as forum threads, online community chat rooms, and videos.

A great example is this guide posted on YouTube, about the latest patch, called “Best Champions TIER List – League of Legends Patch 10.7” by the channel ProGuides Challenger League of Legends Guides. It goes in depth about the best champions to play during this patch, what items to build on them and the overall playstyle to use when playing them. There are tons of Since not everyone has the time to learn the best playstyles for each patch, guides like this help players stay up to date with the game. As stated previously, the intended audience for guides like this is players of lower rank looking to learn about the new patch, higher rank players looking for a different insight, and overall, people who don’t have the time to keep up to date with every little change happening in the game. Once again, the game is broad and this helps people keep up with the current changes.

A problem that can come with guides like this is that they might not be right about every single thing. After all, these guides are made by other players and they are just letting people know what they think is best. There might be more optimal playstyles they didn’t mention. It is still helpful as it is a great insight to the new patch. Another issue there might be is that there are so many different guides. There are tons of different YouTube channels and forum thread posts being made with people trying to help that it can get confusing. One guide might believe something is stronger than what another guide believes. This may confuse learners as they’ll

need to differentiate the two opinions and try to figure out which one is more accurate. However, after awhile you can usually learn which person's guides are more reliable than others.

Even with all these confusions and issues, guides are still a great thing for this community. It helps players stay up to date with the changes while also bringing players together to discuss different changes in hopefully, a civil way. It brings the community together, helping each other become the best player you can. The best way to grow a discourse community is to make the community stronger from the inside. Once people see that the strategy video game discourse community is about helping each other grow, it makes it more inviting for other people to join the community as well. No matter which discourse community you're in, the goal should always be to become better through making your connections within the community stronger or making it more inviting for new people.

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