



## Understanding Newspaper Coverage On E-Sports In Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

E-sports, a form of competition using video for multiplayer video games, particularly among professional players as individually as teams is very fast developing in Malaysia. According to British Broadcasting Corporation, e-sport international sales almost triple its global audience to nearly 600 million people by 2020. The study aimed at understanding the newspaper role in creating the awareness of e-sport in Malaysia. In-depth interview was done and recorded digitally with E-Sports Malaysia (ESM) Head of Communication Muhammad Farouq Abdul Patah as the main respondent. The study found out that traditional media has increase their interest on e-sports since year 2018 and many positive coverages has been given to it to improve people initial perception about e-sports which was earlier deemed as wasteful activities. The newspaper has been considered as a medium which provide better facts regarding e-sports and mobile gaming in compared with social media. Today, with the help of newspapers, older and new generation as beginning to accept e-sports as a skill sport with the ability to generate income, strengthening unity and bridging cultural barriers, as well as create new opportunity for business and careers. This study has fully maximised the use of videography and editing to understand this issue and their result is ready to be uploaded as an e-content in the respected digital platform to disseminate awareness on the topic.

**KEYWORDS:** E-sports, Communication, Video Games, Newspaper reporting, Newspaper Coverage

### 1 INTRODUCTION

E-sport, a form of sport competition using video games, is relatively new in Malaysia, and it is still considered a niche industry dealing with a very specific fan base. Over the years, games developer beginning to realise the potential of e-sports, among others led to more money, better broadcasts, and higher production values. Question arise on the potential to popularise e-sports in Malaysia, with the focus is to what extend are the Malaysian media, particularly the newspapers', in their supports of the gaming activities in their news coverage.

Malaysia has seen a growing interest on the gaming sport after Media Prima group broadcast a FIFA Online 3 National Championship in Malaysia in late 2017. According to the Edge Malaysia, this broadcasting has received an overwhelming 300,000 viewers, when it was

aired simultaneously on television and livestreamed. [2]. The report cited games which made it into worldwide fame as PUBG Mobile and Fortnite, which Southeast Asia became the fastest-growing region with the number of esports enthusiasts expected to double to 19.8 million this year from 9.5 million in 2016.

Astro chief of sports Lee Choong Kay was reported to say both games mentioned above have grown significantly in just a short time with 30 million active players and 200 million downloads in eight months for PUBG Mobile while Fortnite achieved 200 million registered players with 8.3 million concurrent (the total number of players connected to the game at a given time)[2].

According to The Rakyat Post, professional games has also received worldwide recognition, where they are treated as athletes and celebrities with “lucrative careers and earning as much as more money than their traditional sports counterparts”. It is also new to the public domain that winning at international e-sports tournament can also turn the e-sports player into multimillionaires, and have the ability to promote individual’s thinking intelligence, as gaming requires fast hand movement skills and tactical understanding of a game [5].

## **2 OBJECTIVES**

This paper aimed at understanding the newspaper coverage on the e-sport development in Malaysia. In the past, e-sports has been regarded as time wasting activities [1][7], relating it to addiction and gambling activities [3]. Being sedentary for too long is also associated to numerous health complications such as neck pain, muscle degeneration and effects on mental health [3]. Questions too arise whether e-sports can be really accepted as a form of sport or it is a form of recreational activity [6]. Because of these problems related to gaming, question arise whether the media, particularly the newspapers have been given much overage towards e-sports as a positive activity, which have potential to generate income to its players, and the possibility to foster racial harmony [4]

## **3 SIGNIFICANCE (S)**

The video assignments embrace learning in media news reporting. It involves students with the technology they love, the learning increases manifold and learning beyond the classroom. The study help students to create videos to explain topic understanding, make in-depth visual projects, learning new concepts and ways of thinking, as it is important parts leading to better development of by turning the news reporting more depth than text alone.

## **4 METHODOLOGY/TECHNIQUE**

This study use in-depth qualitative interview with main respondent is E-Sports Malaysia (ESM) Head of Communication Muhammad Farouq Abdul Patah. A semi-structed protocol consist a list of pre-established questions were used in this study to encourage response from the informants and allow more freedom for informants to express his view on the topic.

The study embarked on the use of video recording and editing as a learning tool, and interview were done face to face. Instead of using unrecorded interview method, researcher has accepted videography as an important element in social research. Experimenting on the application of visual demonstration of something new would provide a vivid and entertaining

way to stimulate the learner's interest and convey the desired knowledge, leading to successful results.

## 5 RESULT

The study found that the main reason behind increased publicity of e-sports in newspapers is the pushing factor from the government, particularly the Ministry of Youth and Sport, and with the support of The National Sports Council. This pushing factor in encouraging e-sports as a form of healthy activity which can be taken by the youth had spur positive newspaper coverage on the topic, thus pushing e-sports to national level. Respondent agreed that there were negative perceptions on gaming and e-sports among the public prior to the newspaper coverage initiated by the government and there was not much public awareness on the advantages of e-sport without the help of newspaper publicity. Respondent too emphasised the importance of newspaper to provide much knowledge and awareness about e-sport to the public, particularly among the adult readers age 30 and above, as these readers, according to the respondent, would be needing more exposure to help improved their perception on the topic. Newspapers too, played an important role to educate the public on how e-sports can be played professionally, thus creating an industry for itself. Respondent also agree that newspaper is the preferred medium, which provides more accurate information and facts. Respondent hoped that better coverage can be done by the newspapers on e-sport to help e-sport become well accepted, and allow party involved, particularly the association to received funding and incentives to proper e-sport.

## 6 CONCLUSION

Newspaper coverage on e-sport has seen a better trend in compared to the past. News coverage played an important role in reshaping the mind of viewers which has not received much exposure on the topic, and to help foster the acceptance of e-sport as a professional gaming activity to allow it to received funding and incentives leading to better development of e-sport. The videography techniques used in this study too has encouraged active learning and better engagement of viewers, stimulate the learner's interest in the topic. It recommended that videography is used extensively as part of social learning in todays' media environment to increase motivation and enhance learning experience.

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