

The Influence of Youth Culture on Preferred Digital Game Genres in Austria

Eva Frick, Christian Swertz
Universität Wien

2009

Abstract

Since it is a fact that the next generation is growing up very different from the ones before in terms of being influenced by new types of media on one hand and of using those new types of media on the other hand it is important to check out the differences and gain more information and facts about certain issues like what kind of types of persons do use computer games, the age of those people, the behaviour, etc. and the potentially far reaching consequences – not only for themselves but also for community and culture.

Keywords: youth culture, game genres, utilization of computer games

1 Introduction

Since it is a fact that the next generation is growing up very different from the ones before in terms of being influenced by new types of media on one hand and of using those new types of media on the other hand it is important to check out the differences and gain more information and facts about certain issues like what kind of types of persons do use computer games, the age of those people, the behaviour, etc. and the potentially far reaching consequences – not only for themselves but also for community and culture.

We picked out a very specific type of persons as well as a specific type of topic – knowing that the answer will be specific at any rate: either restrictive

but also suggestive of giving the possibility of concretized answers. Young people at the age of eleven years till the age of eighteen seemed to be just perfect for our study: on one hand they just finished elementary school which means they are more autonomous – concerning making decisions as well as having and spending pocket money than younger kids and teenagers till the age of eighteen on the other hand. Those are more dependent on their parents or their legal guardian than the ones after the age of eighteen – in turn of the same reasons like making decisions, spending money, etc.

So the research question of our project was if a certain youth culture prefers a certain game genre out of the digital games. To ascertain the influence of youth culture on preferred digital game genres in Austria it was necessary to gain the data through a research in the field of young people at the age between eleven and eighteen years.

2 Data Collection

For this study the data of 882 questioned young persons were analysed in a detailed statistical way. For the research it was important that the same number of girls and the same number of boys were questioned as well as kids of all ages between eleven and eighteen years. We chose the way of a quantitative analysis for questioning those people and asked them question from seven different topics. The aim was to get an as wide range of an overview as possible.

This survey showed that all of the Austrian young persons are playing computer games at least temporarily. Most of them integrate the use of computer games in their world of life. This shows as one result the active use and media literacy of the young people instead of an impact of computer games on the behaviour of the young people. The concerning students should become media-savvy in the sense of being able to handle the use of media critically is still important but it also shows that the young people are managing this very well.

One important question was if there is a connection between authoritarian behaviour of the parents and the choice of special computer games. The goal was to find out if young people with authoritarian parents are choosing more aggressive games than others. The results show that there is no type of users who only chooses aggressive games and the players can differ authoritarian and democratic ways of education. The anticipation is that there is no connection between aggressive games and educational behaviour (see statistical evaluation): upside you see the factor and on the left side it is numbered as follows: 1 action games, 2 role-play games, 3 shooter, 4 strategy games, 5 adventure games, 6 fun/party-games, 7 e-sports, 8 racing games, 9 simulations, 10 jump'n'runs, 11 edu/infotainment, 12 mini games, 13 skillfulness games, 14 beat'em ups, 15 online games, 16 retro games and 17 nothing of all those genres.

Rotierte Faktorenmatrix^a

	Faktor				
	1	2	3	4	5
f_15_1 Actionspiele	,281	,448	,252	-,039	-,160
f_15_2 Rollenspiele	,300	,166	,460	-,001	-,023
f_15_3 Shooter	,111	,418	,330	-,032	-,091
f_15_4 Strategiespiele	,047	,095	,648	,099	,220
f_15_5 Adventure	,338	,157	,221	,091	,055
f_15_6 Fun-/Partyspiele	,016	,041	-,096	,624	,039
f_15_7 Sportspiele	,090	,411	,008	,061	,167
f_15_8 Rennspiele	,145	,467	,067	,072	,101
f_15_9 Simulationen	,107	-,010	,142	,372	,073
f_15_10 Jump'n'runs	,527	,075	,085	,227	,148
f_15_11 Edu-/Infotainment	,036	,051	,060	,067	,357
f_15_12 Mini Games	,169	,046	,017	,391	,301
f_15_13 Geschicklichkeitsspiele	,149	,071	,016	,084	,584
f_15_14 Beat'em ups	,471	,281	,091	-,040	,099
f_15_15 Online Spiele	,158	,159	,267	,264	-,005
f_15_16 Retro Games	,600	,072	,066	,093	,093
f_15_17 nichts davon	,037	-,275	-,140	-,260	-,105

Extraktionsmethode: Hauptachsen-Faktorenanalyse.

Rotationsmethode: Varimax mit Kaiser-Normalisierung.

a. Die Rotation ist in 7 Iterationen konvergiert.

The following analyses show the most interesting facts that were gained as results from this study. Action games are the most favourite games of kids at the age between eleven and eighteen. And it is nearly the only genre they spend their own money for. Also young persons who do not have money they can spend on computer games like action games best.

				f_15_1 Actionspiele		Gesamt 0 spiele ich nicht
				0 spiele ich nicht	1 spiele ich am liebsten	
compfreqausgab	1,00 vielcomp und	Anzahl		36	98	134

Proceedings

if comp freq und comp kauf	geldcomp	% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	26,9%	73,1%	100,0%
		% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	10,3%	40,5%	22,7%
		% der Gesamtzahl	6,1%	16,6%	22,7%
2,00 vielcomp und keingeldcomp		Anzahl	99	65	164
		% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	60,4%	39,6%	100,0%
		% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	28,4%	26,9%	27,7%
3,00 weingcomp und geldcomp		% der Gesamtzahl	16,8%	11,0%	27,7%
		Anzahl	11	17	28
		% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	39,3%	60,7%	100,0%
4,00 wenigcomp und keingeldcomp		% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	3,2%	7,0%	4,7%
		% der Gesamtzahl	1,9%	2,9%	4,7%
		Anzahl	203	62	265
Gesamt		% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	76,6%	23,4%	100,0%
		% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	58,2%	25,6%	44,8%
		% der Gesamtzahl	34,3%	10,5%	44,8%
		Anzahl	349	242	591
		% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	59,1%	40,9%	100,0%
		% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% der Gesamtzahl	59,1%	40,9%	100,0%

On this index the connecting data have the same colour. 73,1% of those young people, who like to play action games, also spend quite a lot of money on computer games. Of those young people, who do not spend a lot of money on computer games, 39,6% like to play action games. The result is that those who like to play action games spend more money on computer games than those who don't like to play action games.

It is remarkable that no one of the young people, who did participate in this poll, says not to like any genre of computer games. So all young people like to play computer games.

By means of this survey collected results are:

- Action games are played most frequently.
- Young people spend money for action games rather than for any other game.
- Those who do not spend money for games but also play quite a lot, are also playing action games most frequently.
- Also those who do not play a lot, prefer to play action games.
- "Do not play any game" has not been said by any of the asked young persons.
- Those who play few times and do not spend money for games prefer to play fun-and party-games.

Because of the analysis of the data it can be assumed that the influence of the parents on the behaviour of utilization of their kids is rather insignificant. The general decision which game will be bought is influenced by the kids. Parents attach importance to as valuable commended games. As well computer games as a first approach with computer technology and the use of computers can be assumed.

3 Results

In nearly all of the examined cases the utilization of computer games is

rather inconspicuous. Only in four out of 882 cases, which marks a number of not even 0,5% (all male), a conspicuous use was identified. This means no friends, the person plays a lot and prefers aggressive games. Assumed factors of influence like the educational behaviour of the parents could not be proved. And at this point it is very important to mention that this identified conspicuous is not the prove of being aggressively influenced by playing computer games and – in further series – it is not the prove of a connection between playing aggressive and violent computer games and the acting to that effect. The study “11/18“ shows in comparison with 14 nationwide studies a practical and useful supplementation. In particular the assumed insignificant influence on the games/game genres by parents could be proved. Because of the results it was shown that taking measures of educational preservations are not necessary. Enlightenment, clarification and orientation as well would be important – not only for young persons but also for parents and legal guardians. It might be wise to make action games a subject of discussion.

4 Quantitative detailed account

The focus is the analysis of a connection between the different items of the research like educational behaviour of the members of the family, procurement of games with aggressive content (action games, role plays, shooter, strategy games, adventure games, fun games, party games, sports games, jump'n'runs, simulations, beat'em'ups, etc.), numbers of friends, utilization of internet and computer games, preferred game genres, youth scenes, danger of habit formation, connections between types of schools and game genres, connection online games and stay abroad, influence of parents, preferred game genres of “little players”, “fun players”, connection preferred game genres and characteristics of games and the connection game genres and youth cultures.

One goal was to answer the question if there is a connection between au-

thoritarian characteristics of parents and the use of aggressive computer games. The diagram shows that the questioned young people are able to differentiate between a rather authoritarian and a rather democratic style of raising children. So the next step was used for an analysing this topic concerning the factors of the different types of games (see next page). The dates which were gained through this analysis show that no specific type of user can be identified who is playing aggressive games. Therefore we can assume that there is no connection between aggressive games and style of raising children.

Rotierte Faktorenmatrix^a

	Faktor				
	1	2	3	4	5
f_15_1 Actionspiele	,281	,448	,252	-,039	-,160
f_15_2 Rollenspiele	,300	,166	,460	-,001	-,023
f_15_3 Shooter	,111	,418	,330	-,032	-,091
f_15_4 Strategiespiele	,047	,095	,648	,099	,220
f_15_5 Adventure	,338	,157	,221	,091	,055
f_15_6 Fun-/Partyspiele	,016	,041	-,096	,624	,039
f_15_7 Sportspiele	,090	,411	,008	,061	,167
f_15_8 Rennspiele	,145	,467	,067	,072	,101
f_15_9 Simulationen	,107	-,010	,142	,372	,073
f_15_10 Jump'n'runs	,527	,075	,085	,227	,148
f_15_11 Edu-/Infotainment	,036	,051	,060	,067	,357
f_15_12 Mini Games	,169	,046	,017	,391	,301
f_15_13 Geschicklichkeitsspiele	,149	,071	,016	,084	,584
f_15_14 Beat'em ups	,471	,281	,091	-,040	,099
f_15_15 Online Spiele	,158	,159	,267	,264	-,005
f_15_16 Retro Games	,600	,072	,066	,093	,093
f_15_17 nichts davon	,037	-,275	-,140	-,260	-,105

Extraktionsmethode: Hauptachsen-Faktorenanalyse.
 Rotationsmethode: Varimax mit Kaiser-Normalisierung.

a. Die Rotation ist in 7 Iterationen konvergiert.

One question, which was also very important in that study, was the providing of games with aggressive content. The study shows that some young people spend their own money for computer games. Furthermore the ques-

tion, which games young persons buy when they have to spend their own money, arises with more importance. Or the converse perception seems to be very interesting: What kind of games are played by those young people who spend little money for computer games?

For the following calculations there was used a new variable with four characteristics:

1. The questioned people told to play computer games often and spend money on computer games.
2. The questioned people told to play computer games often but do not spend money on computer games.
3. The questioned people told to play computer games rarely and spend money on computer games.
4. The questioned people told to play computer games rarely and do not spend money on computer games.

The following statistical description shows the connections:

			f_15_1 Actionspiele		Gesamt	
			0 spiele ich nicht	1 spiele ich am liebsten	0 spiele ich nicht	
compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	1,00 vielcomp und geldcomp	Anzahl	36	98	134	
		% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	26,9%	73,1%	100,0%	
		% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	10,3%	40,5%	22,7%	
	2,00 vielcomp und keingeldcomp	% der Gesamtzahl	6,1%	16,6%	22,7%	
		Anzahl	99	65	164	
		% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	60,4%	39,6%	100,0%	
	3,00 weingcomp und geldcomp	% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	28,4%	26,9%	27,7%	
		% der Gesamtzahl	16,8%	11,0%	27,7%	
		Anzahl	11	17	28	
4,00 wenigcomp und keingeldcomp	% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	39,3%	60,7%	100,0%		
	% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	3,2%	7,0%	4,7%		
	% der Gesamtzahl	1,9%	2,9%	4,7%		
Gesamt	Anzahl	203	62	265		
	% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	76,6%	23,4%	100,0%		
	% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	58,2%	25,6%	44,8%		
	% der Gesamtzahl	34,3%	10,5%	44,8%		
	Anzahl	349	242	591		
			% von compfreqausgab if comp freq und comp kauf	59,1%	40,9%	100,0%
			% von f_15_1 Actionspiele	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
			% der Gesamtzahl	59,1%	40,9%	100,0%

The chart shows in an exemplarily way the data which are connected: 73,1% of those, who like to play action games, also spend quite a lot of money for computer games. But in relation to that only 39,6% of those, who do not spend a lot of money for computer games like to play action games. The result is that those, who like to play action games, rather spend money for computer games than those, who do not like to play action games very much.

In comparison to the action games the analysis of shooters, strategy games, adventure games fun-/party-games, racing games, simulations, jump'n'runs, edu-/infotainment games, mini games, skillfulness games, beat'em ups and retro games shows a similar effect.

It attracts the attention that no questioned person tells not to like no genre at

all. The conclusion is that all young people like to play computer games. The represented results show that

- action games are the most played game genre.
- young people spend money rather for action games than for any other genre.
- those who do not spend money for computer games but play quite a lot, prefer to play action games as well.
- also those who do not play a lot but spend money for computer games, prefer to play action games.
- the button “Don’t play anything” was not used by any of the questioned people.
- those who do not play a lot and do not spend a lot of money prefer soonest fun-/party games.

The most popular genre is the one of the action games. It can be assumed that most of the questioned people spend their money soonest for action games. But it has to be pointed out that there was no explicit question about spending money for which genre in the questionnaire. It would be possible that the young people spend their own money for learning programs but still prefer to play action games. But it is to assume that they spend money for the genre they like best.

Only the persons who do not play a lot of computer games and do not spend a lot of money on computer games do not prefer action games. There are different interpretations possible:

- Perhaps parents control the behaviour of gaming by buying or rather not buying computer games.
- If the young people play computer games they do not play at home but play at a friends house.
- Action games need a certain amount of previous knowledge which is not existing by people who do not play a lot.

- Fun-/Party games are cheaper or even for free.
- A more specified demonstration would only be possible through a next study.

5 Résumé

The study “11/18” considered quite a lot of margin concerning the number of the analysed topics. Although this might be too multi-layered on the first point of view it allows a broad possibility of comparison and correlations. With a spot check of 882 questioned young persons in Austria a representative evaluation is possible. A representative evaluation is also guaranteed by the quota sample: the same number of persons have been asked. For the study “11/18” altogether 441 young persons of the age between eleven and fourteen years as well as 441 young persons between fifteen and eighteen have been asked. This allows a good comparability of those gaping age differences.

Because of the analysis of the for young persons important topics “friends”, “education”, “look”, “computer games”, “pocket money”, “utilization of the cell phone” as well as “attitude to work and job” it was possible to record all relevant topics. Through this broad collection of topics a good insight into the habits, line of thoughts and behaviour of the young persons could be won. Since nearly all people between 11 and 18 do play computer games it is not reasonable to divide between computer culture and other cultures, but to take a look at the role digital games play in different youth cultures. In this study this is determined by the preferred game genres in a first approach.

6 References

- Aufenanger, Stefan (2005): Computer. In: Hüther, Jürgen / Schorb, Bernd (Hrsg.): Grundbegriffe Medienpädagogik. 4., vollständig neu konzipierte Auflage, kopaed Verlag, München S. 55 – 61
- Baatz, Ursula (1993): Das Spiel ist Ernst, der Ernst ist Spiel: Ein Versuch über unendliche Spiele. In: Baatz Ursula. u.a. (Hrsg.) 1993: Vom Ernst des Spieles: Über Spiel und Spieltheorie. Dietrich Reimer Verlag, Berlin
- Beavis, Catherine (1998): Computer games: Youth culture, resistant readers and consuming passions. Deakin University, Adelaide
- Buckingham, David (1998): Teaching Popular Culture. Beyond Radical Pedagogy. UCL Press, London
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly (1992): Flow: Das Geheimnis des Glücks. Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart
- Diener, Holger u. a. (2005): Game Based Learning. Spiel oder Ernst? Online Ressource:
http://www.rostock.igd.fhg.de/Workshops/WS_Game_based_Learning/files/VortragGBL_Diener_Martens_Malo.pdf, download am 07.07. 2006
- Frasca, Gonzalo (2004): Videogames of the Oppressed. Online Resource (Download: 13.08.2008):
<http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/firstperson/Boalian>
- Fritz, Jürgen (2003): Warum spielt eigentlich jemand Computerspiele. In: Fritz/Fehr 2003a, S. 10-1
- Fritz, Jürgen (2004): Das Spiel verstehen: Eine Einführung in Theorie und Bedeutung. Juventa, Weinheim und München
- Galarneau, Lisa (2005): Authentic Learning Experiences Through Play: Games, Simulations and the Construction of Knowledge. Proceedings of DiGRA 2005, Conference: Chaning Views, Worlds in Play, Hamilton
- Gunter, Glenda; Kenny, Robert (2005): A Case for a Formal Design Paradigm for Serious Games. Online Ressource (Download am 16.09.2006):
<http://www.units.muohio.edu/codeconference/papers/papers/-Gunter%20Kenny%20Vick%20paper.pdf>

- Gee, Jim (2007): The Repertoire of Human Identities and the Digital World. Online Ressource (Download am 13.08.2008): http://spotlight.mac-found.org/main/entry/jim_gee_repertoire_human_identity/
- Giddens, Anthony (1990): The Consequences of Modernity. Polity Press, Cambridge
- Huizinga, Johan (2004): Homo Ludens: Vom Ursprung der Kultur im Spiel. 19. Auflage, Rowohlts Enzyklopädie, Hamburg
- Lischka, Konrad (2003): Computerspiele: Junge Technik mit alter Tradition Betrachtungen zur Kulturgeschichte des Computerspiels. In: Fritz, Jürgen /Fehr, Wolfgang (2003a), S. 1-4
- Malone, Thomas W. (1980): What Makes Things Fun to Learn: Heuristics for Designing Instructional Computer Games, Palo Alto Reasearch Center, Palo Alto
- Masuch, Maic (2004): Spielend in die Zukunft. Serious Games. Online Ressource: http://www.game-face.de/article.php3?id_article=118, download am 28.08.2006
- Oerter Rolf (1999): Psychologie des Spiels. Verlag Beltz, Weinheim und Basel
- Piaget, Jean (1990) : Nachahmung, Spiel und Traum: die Entwicklung der Symbolfunktion beim Kinde. 2. Auflage, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart
- Plessner, Helmuth (1950): Lachen und Weinen: Eine Untersuchung nach den Grenzen menschlichen Verhaltens. A. Francke AG Verlag, Bern
- Prensky, Marc (2001): Digital Game-Based Learning. McGraw-Hill, New York
- Scheuerl, Hans (1990): Das Spiel: Untersuchungen über sein Wesen, seine pädagogischen Möglichkeiten und Grenzen. 11. Auflage, Verlag Beltz, Weinheim und Basel
- Sefton-Green, Julian (1998): Digital Diversions. Youth Culture in the Age of Multimedia. UCL Press, London

Swertz, Christian (1999): Computer als Spielzeug. In: Spektrum Freizeit (2), S. 112-120

Vygotsky, Lev Semenovič (1978): Mind in society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes. Harvard Univ. Press: Cambridge

This work is licenced under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Austria License. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/at/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California 94105, USA.