

## E-sports Development and Gaming Addictions

Dr. FU Wai

The development of digital technology has allowed all entertainment forms to be delivered via cyberspace as e-entertainment. This interconnected cyberspace technology has evolved such that it allows the player to create a new identity in this new cyberspace, often parallel to one's identity in real life. This has led to a changing discourse in which "e-gaming" can be regarded as a cyberspace equivalent to sport in daily life, and this in turn has led to the establishment of an extensive e-sporting community that makes e-sports an attractive career. However, this has brought with it a new difficulty in the shape of gaming addiction.



Online Talk on 傾偈有學者打機唔上癮 –  
Co-PI Dr. TSANG, Chung-Kin [left] and PC Dr. FU, Wai [right]

Existing models for the prevention of internet addiction and for internet gaming addiction usually emphasize individual psychological factors related to addiction; therefore, treatment is usually aimed at developing personal coping skills. However, existing models overlook key features involved in the context of the launch of e-sports, as well as other new developments in e-gaming. For example, the monetization of e-gaming allows players to earn money through the transaction of digital weapons obtained in games; the evolution of key opinion leaders in the promotion of an e-sports culture; changing values that now allow gamers to view e-gaming as a possible career; government positioning of e-sports as a tool for developing national and cultural pride; and the formation of hyperreality that reverses the role of the human being from "I log in to play" to "I am positioned in the network of virtual reality", to the extent that one's identity in social media and within an e-game can be more important than one's identity in real life.

In this project supported by IDS(C), the team coordinated by Dr. Wai FU of the Department of Counselling and Psychology, study e-sports and gaming addiction on five levels – the micro-level of personal factors and characteristics, the meso-level of family, schools, and NGOs, the exo-level of e-gaming and e-sports business sectors, the macro-level of policy and social factors, and the chrono-level of the historical development of cultural discourses. The aim of the project is to analyze the cultural, political and social impacts of e-entertainment holistically and to facilitate exchange among stakeholders in developing a sustainable development knowledge platform.

### Expected Impact

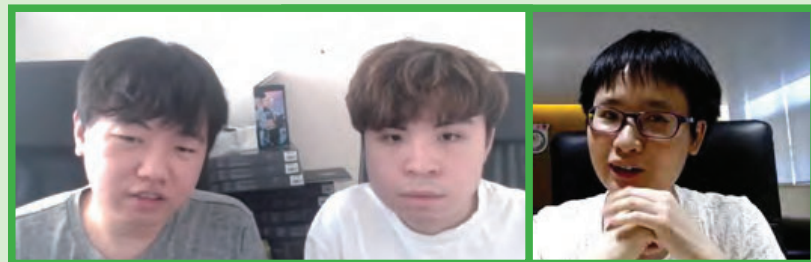
The project connects e-sports stakeholders (e-sports players, e-sports teams, e-sports organizers, e-sports KoLs) with health professionals leading to the future collaboration in terms of health psychology related to e-sports. Additionally, the project aims to increase youth awareness and understanding of e-sports, including potential career opportunities. The results will enhance the understanding of educationists in the trend of e-sports and problematic gaming behaviors in terms of the phenomenon, its motivational pathways and neurological correlates. The results will be disseminated through a sustainable development knowledge platform (SDKP).

### Selected Related Publications

Fu, W., & Yu, C. K. C. (2015). Predicting disordered gambling with illusory control, gaming preferences, and internet gaming addiction among Chinese youth. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 13, 391-401.

Yu, C. K. C., & Fu, W. (2019). Information technology usage as a moderator between disordered gambling, internet gaming addiction, and illusory control. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 17(4), 781-792.

Public Webinar  
on Indie Game  
Production and  
Digital Culture



Public Webinar on the Development of e-sports in Hong Kong [left]; Hong Kong professional League of Legends team Frank Esports (FAK), the head coach Wong Chun-him (Skywalk) and the player Tsang Tak-lam (Holo); Co-PI Dr. LAM Gigi [right]

