



Aggression Levels Increase When Playing Video Games Anonymously

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Research Question

How is aggression affected after playing competitive video games against anonymous and known opponents?



Background

- Competitive video games are a source of aggression, whether they are violent or non-violent (Adachi et al., 2016).
- Computer opponents cause greater aggression in players than human opponents (Williams & Clippinger, 2002).
- Playing with and/or against fellow humans negates aggression (Kaye et al., 2014).

Predictions

Participants in the anonymous condition will have higher levels of aggression than those in the known condition .



Method

Participants

- 16 undergraduates (4 males, 12 females)

Design

- Participants were randomly assigned to one condition: anonymous or known confederate

Procedure

- Participants were seated in their assigned room setup (see Figure 1)
- Participants played two rounds of Mario Kart with confederate
- Participants completed aggression scale (see Figure 2) (Anderson et al., 1995)

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
___ I feel furious.		___ I feel like I'm about to explode.		
___ I feel willful.		___ I feel friendly.		
___ I feel aggravated.		___ I feel understanding.		
___ I feel tender.		___ I feel amiable.		

Figure 2

Room Setup

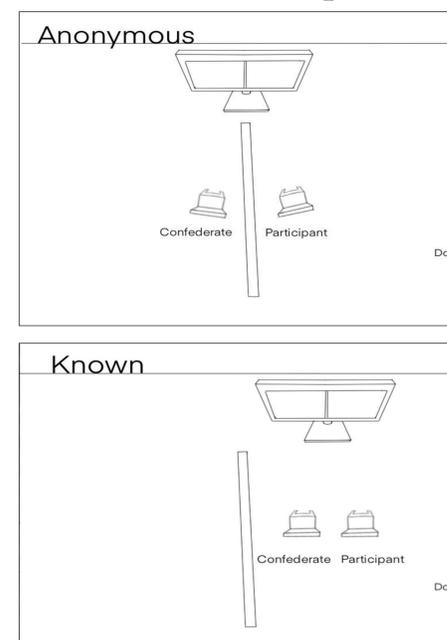


Figure 1

Results

Anonymous versus Known Gaming Conditions

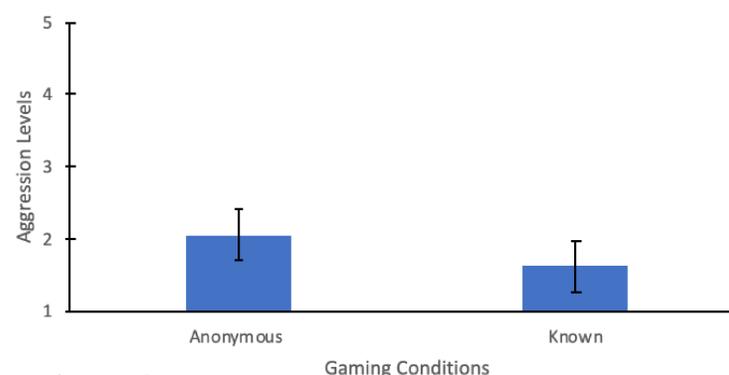


Figure 3

Note. The independent samples t-test was statistically significant, $t(14) = -2.45, p = .028$.

Discussion

Findings

The hypothesis was supported: Participants felt more aggressive after playing video game with anonymous partner than known partner.

Implications

People may be less aggressive if there was less anonymity on the internet, which could lead to less harassment and toxicity in online spaces.

Future Research

- Violent compared to nonviolent competitive video games
- Anonymous vs. computer vs. human conditions
- With realistic anonymity on online game

References

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Elmhurst College KEYSTONE Project
KEYs to Success Through year ONE (KEYSTONE) Project is an Elmhurst College initiative funded by the National Science Foundation to increase the retention and success of 1st year students in the STEM disciplines. Award #DUE 1160956