Abstract

Background: There is an element called lootbox in videogames that appears to be an attribute with addictive potential with respect to gambling. It is a form of element within video games that offer players random digital rewards. This aspect has been present in games for a long time, and countries such as Belgium and the Netherlands have reacted to this by law to regulate the availability of certain types of lootbox. Lootboxes as a phenomenon are not sufficiently explored and mapped in the context of the Czech Republic.

Aim: The aim of this thesis is to map the general and risky use of lootboxes through a questionnaire using the Risky Lootbox Index among Czech video game players. It asks how Czech video game players behave in relation to lootboxes and to what extent this risky use occurs. It also looks at differences in this use and whether gamers themselves perceive this use of lootboxes as a form of gambling.

Methods: Quantitative in the form of an online questionnaire, using the Risky Lootbox Index tool. Where 292 respondents completed the questionnaire with an age range between 15 and 40 years. The research population is predominantly male and consists of Czech video game players. In the questionnaire they are selected according to other criteria such as experience with lootboxes. Data collection was based on covenient sampling and snowball sampling method. Data was analyzed and interpreted through programs such as Excel and Jamovi, using statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, T-test, correlation and analysis of variance.

Results: The research shows that the distribution of lootboxes among players is high. 240 respondents (82 %) out of 292 have experience with lootboxes. Some of the respondents spend a lot of money on lootboxes. The average value is around 500,-, the highest amount spent was 10 000,-. There is option to made money from lootboxes, but there is a significant disparity, with earnings in 1 year being 100,005, - compared to spending in 30 days, which was 64,000, -. The RLI showed how Czech players scored with an average score of 22.35 points. A large proportion of respondents scored within the norm, which is based on the calculation of the standard deviation and the average RLI score. However, a portion of the respondents were above the norm and definitely deserve our attention for possible intervention. Relationships where a statistical association ($p < 0.05$) is seen is for RLI scoring and lootbox spending with a slight positive correlation ($r=0.14$), or for father's educational attainment and RLI score. These relationships do not appear to be statistically significant for mother's education and RLI score, female-to-male spending. A good result is that a large proportion of gamblers have an understanding of lootboxes as something potentially risky and agree with the analogy to gambling.

Conclusion: The paper highlights the risky use of lootboxes and a general description of this phenomenon. Players definitely have experience with lootboxes in all kinds of video games. The RLI showed that riskier users are also found in the Czech Republic. The gaming population has a relative view of the likely analogy with gambling and is aware of it. This work can be an impetus for generating further work on a similar topic, or for examining the RLI questionnaire more thoroughly in practice and validating the instrument.

Keywords: Lootbox – gambling – risky use