

Mainstreaming of subcultures: The identification effect of e-sports culture among youth groups

Postprint

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Abstract

During the pandemic, restrictions on outdoor activities have diminished the capacity of traditional sports competitions to consolidate cultural identity. The large-scale migration of youth to online platforms has revealed the potent capacity of e-sports to generate cultural identity effects in the contemporary era. From the perspective of identity theory, this paper investigates the formation process of e-sports cultural identity within youth cohorts. Through survey research and in-depth interviews, this study analyzes the underlying motivations driving transformations in youth ideology, emotional characteristics, and cultural identity. The study reveals that through the process of symbol transmission to the group via ritual communication, group members accomplish the cognitive construction of collective identity, thereby generating and sustaining group identification.

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