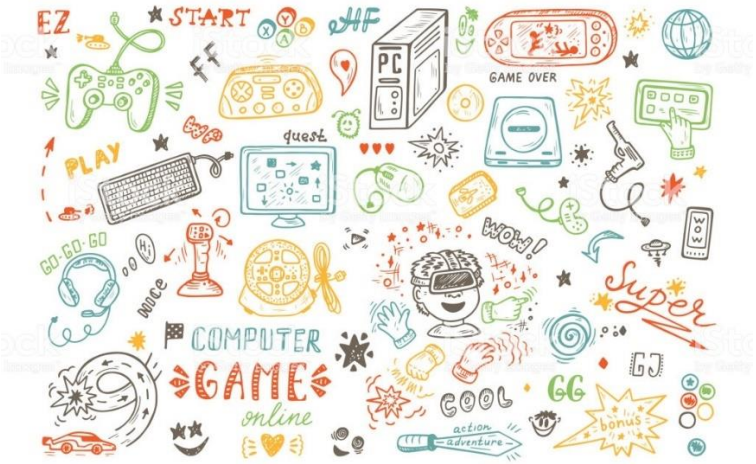
Children and Video Games: What Do Parents Think?

A Study on Dutch Chinese parent's attitude towards children's playing of video games



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ABSTRACT

Today, video-game-playing has become one of the most popular entertainment among children and one of the hottest topics among parents. As the devices are more private and the screens are smaller, many parents find that it is more and more complicated to monitor children's gaming activities. In China, many parents have concerns about video games, especially the possible negative effects on children's study.Then, do Chinese parents' in the Netherlands share the same concerns? What are their attitude towards children's playing of video games as compared to local Dutch parents?

Through semi-structured interviews, this research explores parents' personal thoughts, awareness and method of parenting regarding to children's gaming activities. 9 Dutch Chinese parents and 3 local Dutch parents were interviewed. The result shows that in general Chinese parents living in the Netherlands have a more negative attitude towards video games than Dutch parents do, though most of them also admit that video games may have positive effects. The effects of video games on study and eye sight are two mostly frequently mentioned reasons when they explain their attitude. As for the strategies and style of parenting, most Chinese parents think they are more restrictive and stricter than Dutch parents, but more lenient than traditional Chinese parents, which could be the result of a combination of Chinese and Dutch culture. It is also interesting to see that Chinese parents with Dutch partners looks more relaxed than those who have Chinese partners. In comparison with Dutch parents, Chinese parents' awareness of PEGI rating system is lower. Since China has not introduced any rating system for television, film and video games, it is not natural for Chinese parents to be aware of PEGI and to use it.

It can be seen that parents of girls are slightly more protective than parents of boys, although the differences are not very significant. The level of integration, children's age, type of games and device have more significant association with parents' attitude.

KEYWORDS: *Video games, Parental mediation, Children's media use, Chinese parents*

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Chapter 1 Introduction

From television to computer, a complicated relationship exists between children, parents and media. Topics about children's television watching, social media usage and video game playing are widely discussed by parents. Should parents be open-minded and let children embrace what media brings to the world, or should they be more careful about the potential risks that might harm their children? How many media hours per day would be best for children? What can parents do to suitably monitor, control and mediate children's media use and behaviour? From one generation to the next, such questions have been bothering many parents and have not yet been completely answered.

Nowadays, with the increasing popularity of digital media, parents have found that it is more and more complicated to monitor children's media activities. For example, media devices are more private and the screens are smaller, which makes it harder than ever for parents to know what children are doing and who they are talking to on their laptop, smartphones or tablets. Among other forms of media use, video game playing is one of the most popular among children. Studies on children and young adults show that most of them have game experience, playing video games at least occasionally, and many playing frequently, especially boys (Ferguson&Olson,2013).

The concerns about children's playing of video games are shared by parents, institutions and governments all over the world, including the Netherlands and China. According to news reports in early 2018, the Chinese government released a decision to impose new policies limiting the publishing of video games, which is the strictest restriction of the Chinese game industry in history. This decision raised a wide discussion on Weibo, a famous social media platform in China. Some of the netizens think it is a positive idea to have more restrictions on the game industry because many games on the market contain "unhealthy content" such as violence and sex. Video games can be highly addictive to children, and many young people spend a long time gaming, which is considered a threat for their health and development. Others think that it is a mistake to simply restrict the game publishing, as it will damage the game market and industry in China without solving the real problem. For example, introducing the age rating system would be more efficient and reasonable.

In China there is an ongoing conflict between parents and children regarding video games, with the media continually reporting stories about young people who are addicted to video games and suffer serious consequences. The social and media environment may increase parents' negative attitude towards children's game-playing. Some parents even send their children to special "schools" or "centres" which claim to "cure the addiction to games and the internet". According to news reports and social media in China, there are more than 400 centres of this kind where children are severely abused, both physically and mentally. The government has attempted to close or regulate these centres, but the problem remains. The market is large because many parents still want their children's "addiction" to be "cured". Although these parents are extreme examples, this phenomenon does, to some extent, reflect the concerns about

games and the internet in Chinese society.

In the Netherlands, Chinese is one of the largest minorities, and consequently the community is influenced by both Chinese and Dutch culture. Therefore, are Chinese parents living in the Netherlands still convinced by Chinese society, media and government to hold a negative and strict attitude? Is there any difference between Chinese parents and local Dutch parents in the attitude towards children's playing of video games? To have a more detailed and deep investigation, this study will focus on the research question with several sub-questions.

RQ: What are Dutch Chinese parents' attitude towards children's playing of video games as compared to local Dutch parents, and why?

SQ 1: What factors are associated with Dutch Chinese parents' attitude toward video games (e.g. social-economic status, the level of social integration)?

SQ 2: To what extent are Dutch Chinese parents aware of the positive and negative effects of video games on children?

SQ 3: To what extent do Dutch Chinese parents apply mediation under professional guidance (e.g. get suggestions from institutions/websites…)?

SQ 4: To what extent do Dutch Chinese parents use PEGI system?

To explore these questions, 12 parents from 11 families were interviewed. 9 of the interviewees are originally from China, and the other 3 are local Dutch parents. During the semi-structured interviews, parents talked about their attitude towards video games and children's gaming behaviours; their awareness of both positive and negative effects of video games, and what they do to protect and guide their children.

Chinese parents are a niche group in the Dutch population, and research on their attitude towards video games is very limited. The aim of this thesis is to raise some attention to their opinions, awareness and behaviour regarding children's playing of video games; and additionally to see if they face problems and are in need of more help and information from the professional and academic field. Due to limited time and resources, as well as the nature of the semi-structured interview, the scale of the research is small and the result is not representative. Further research can involve more interviewees and combine quantitative surveys to reach results that are more generalized.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

Video games have become one of the most popular forms of entertainment among children. Since the main place where children play video games is their home, parents play an important role in monitoring, protecting and guiding game playing. Parents should also pay attention to children's consumption of video games and look for other activities for children to play and learn (Chiu, Lee&Huang, 2004). Before discussing parental attitudes and awareness towards video games and the effect they have on

children, and their strategies for parenting, it is essential to examine the contemporary media environment in which children and parents live; the development of video games, and studies and theories about children, parents and games.

2.1. Media environment and the development of video games

2.1.1 Features of the contemporary media environment

For young children, media is an enormous presence in their lives and a huge claim of time and attention. Rideout (2015) studied the media use of children aged over 8 in the US and drew some conclusions. Firstly, young people interact with media in remarkably diverse ways regarding tastes and preferences. Furthermore, there is diversity in media use between different genders, race/ethnicity or socioeconomic status. According to Rideout, it is concerning that children from lower-income families and black and Hispanic children spend significantly more time with screen media; and that their primary media activities are watching TV and videos, playing games, and using social media.

Although digital media has great potential for facilitating user-generated content, there is still more consumption than creation in young children's media use. Children aged between 8-12 spend 78% of their media time on "passive consumption" and "interactive consumption", including watching, listening, reading and playing with media content created by others. Rideout found that the ubiquity of entertainment media in young children's lives is also astounding. In the US, around 20% of 8 to 12-year-old children spend more than 6 hours a day on screen media, absorbing a large amount of content. Gaming is one of the most popular media activities for children aged between 8-12. 66% of them play games; including console, handheld, computer and mobile games; for an average of 2 hours on any given day (Rideout, 2015).

New technology has changed the media environment and brought new features which have been widely discussed by researchers in recent decades. Several scholars have argued that compared to traditional media, digital media such as the internet are shown to have the significant feature of being more personal and individual (Delfos, 2013; Nikken&Jansz, 2013). Media use increasingly takes place in separate spaces, or on mobile platforms and therefore tends to be a more solitary activity (Kennedy&Wellman, 2007; Rideout, Foehr&Roberts, 2010). For example, children can use social media on their personal mobile phones and play digital games individually in their own bedrooms without parents or friends.

Another feature documented by Sonck, Nikken and de Haan (2013) is that the contemporary media environment is far more complex and interactive. The internet and new media devices give users more possibilities to choose the information they receive, to share and create their own content, and to communicate with others. Therefore, users are no longer passive and can do more with media. As a focus for multiple activities as well as a venue for social interaction, content production and entertainment use, the complexity of the internet could cause a serious problem for partners to guide their children.

Additionally, a large number of parents feel that children are better in receiving new technologies and using new media than they are (Nikken, 2012). Delfos (2013)

mentioned that unlike children who grow up with new media, parents often feel uncomfortable and unconfident in the digital media environment and think that they do not have sufficient skills to assist their children.

2.1.2 The development of video games

Gameplay is an activity that brings enjoyment and pleasure (Prensky, 2001). According to Cruickshank and Telfer (1980), gaming is a competitive interaction with certain rules and specific goals. It requires some skill and often involves chance and imaginary setting. Prato, Feijóo, Nepelski et al. (2010) defined the term video game as "an electronic or computerized game played by manipulating images on a video display or television screen" (p 17). Jansz (2005) described a video game as an "interactive, rule-based system based on computer-processing power. Its outcomes are variable, quantifiable, and differentially valorized. The efforts of players influence the outcome, and players feel attached to the outcome (p 221)".

Due to the blurring of computing and video technologies, the terms video games and computer games have become synonymous (Mitchell&Savill-Smith,2004). Within several decades multiple types of video games have been developed, and the term can now be used to encompass arcade games, console games, single PC games, online games (Cao&Downing, 2008) and mobile games (Lenhart, Kahne, Middaugh et al., 2008).

In 1958, William Higinbotham developed a game called *Tennis For Two* to entertain visitors to Brookhaven National Laboratory in the USA, which became the starting point of the development of video games. After that, however, nothing remarkable happened until 1966 when television engineer Ralph H. Baer presented the idea of using television sets to play video games. In the following decades, this idea was gradually developed into the video game console (Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2016).

The first large scale launch of video games in consumer markets happened in the 1970s, and video games became an industry. Although it is comparatively new, the video game has already become a significant shareholder in the media and content industry and the market is growing fast (Jiow&Lim, 2012; Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2016).

Based on studies by Malliet and Meyer (2005) and Prato et al. (2010), Jiow and Lim divided the development of video games into several eras, including first-generation console (1972-1976), second-generation console (1976-1983), third and fourth-generation consoles (1983-1995), and post-1995. Technological advancements in the interface and graphic design that enhanced the game design features, as well as player activity, are the main marks of each era. Step by step, the emergence of the internet, broadband, wireless Internet access, location-based technologies and cloud computing in addition to the innovation of portable telecommunication devices, provide new possibilities for video game design and play (Jiow&Lim, 2012).

In the past few years, the rise of freemium games[1] and the proliferation of games for mobile phones, has heralded a significant change in the game industry. Figures in 2014

[1] Freemium: games (often apps) that you can download for free, but for which players then have to pay a fee in order to proceed past a certain point, to eliminate advertising, or to unlock more of the game (for example, new levels or better items) (Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al. 2016:17).

and 2015 show that the global revenue for traditional console games and PC games is starting to decline, while online games and mobile games are growing fast (Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2016).

Video games are increasingly popular among children, and it is becoming easier for children to have access to video games due to the development of mobile communication devices (Jiow&Lim, 2012) and the internet. Statistics provided on the Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE) website show that in 2015 the interactive software industry which represents publishers and developers of video games is the fastest growing sector of the European content industry, expecting to attract more than 20 billion EUR consumer spending in 2015.

2.1.3 The development of video games in China

China has a history of video games stretching back over three decades. In this huge market, the world's largest game population consumes numerous video games developed locally or imported from USA, Europe, Japan, Korea as well as other countries and regions.

Cao and Downing (2008) documented the development of video games in China and discussed three main forms of games: arcades, home games consoles, and single PC games. In the early 1980s, the Chinese game industry and market began to form. After the post-Mao opening and reform drive, privately owned and coin-operated arcades featuring the US and Japanese games entered the Chinese market. Almost simultaneously, home game consoles made their first arrival in China. According to the authors, two leading Chinese manufacturers Xiao Ba Wang and Yuxing named their products ‘study consoles' and branded them as children's education aids with the purpose of attracting customers. The strategy worked well, and the products became a trend among urban children and parents.

Both arcades and home game consoles were popular initially, but their prosperity did not last long. In 2000 a regulation was announced by the Chinese government to restrict arcade game rooms since the public became highly concerned about young people’s waste of time and energy, as well as about gambling and illegal activities in arcade game rooms. Since then, the market has started to fade (Cao&Downing, 2008). The government also restricted all game consoles on the market. Until July 2015 when the ban was ended, China had been a console-free market for 15 years; which left a huge space for PC, online and mobile games.

Single PC games firstly arrived in China in the early 1980s and rapidly grew in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Cao&Downing, 2008). The late 1990s also marked the arrival of casual online games; while the massively multiplayer online games (MMOGs) made the breakthrough in 2001 (Ernkvist&Ström, 2008) and proceeded to increase annually (Chen, 2014).

In recent years, with the development of 3G network and handheld technologies, the mobile game market has grown rapidly in China. Liu and Li (2011) documented that China is estimated to be one of the largest mobile telephone markets in the world, and mobile gaming is one of the favourite services among Chinese mobile Internet users.

Cao and Downing (2008) argued that playing video games has become one of the

most popular leisure activities among Chinese youth, and stated that the percentage of urban youth who reported video games as their favourite medium reached 25.4%, followed by television (18.8%).

2.2 The motivation for playing video games

In our daily lives, it is quite common to hear parents complaining that their children spend too much time on video games. Some parents find it hard to understand why video games are so attractive to children and young adults. The academic world is also curious about the motivations for playing video games, and some studies have been conducted by scholars.

The term motivation is defined as "an individual's choice to engage in an activity and the intensity of effort or persistence in that activity" (Pintrich&Schrauben, 1992; Wolters, 1998, cited in Garris, Ahlers,&Driskell 2000, p.444).

Garris et al. (2000) mentioned two main types of motivation: *Intrinsic motivation* refers to motives to perform a behaviour that is driven by participation, including challenge, curiosity, fantasy and specifically. *Extrinsic motivation*, on the contrary, refers to motives to perform a behaviour that is driven by external rewards. For example, the outcome, levels, scores, points, missions, quizzes, leaderboards, ranking and rating.

According to Suess, Suoninen, Garitaonandia et al. (1998), media, including games, are an important part of the everyday lives of youths in several ways. They use media together with peers, and media can be a source of topics of conversation and interaction. Moreover, media facilitates identification with different groups and their values. Therefore, video games can be a way to promote children's social relations with peers.

Game playing can also bring increased interest, enjoyment, involvement and confidence, leading to greater persistence and intensity of effort, that results in system feedback on performance in the game context. In the end, gamers will repetitively play and continually return to the games overtimes. This loop is termed a *game cycle* (Garris et al., 2000).

There are several theories about motivations that are widely used to explain media use. Originated in the 1940s, the Uses and Gratifications theory (U&G) has now been successfully adapted into media studies. This theory provides an experience-oriented angle to explain how people use media to fulfil their needs and receive gratification (Wu, Wang&Tsai, 2010). From the U&G perspective, Yee (2006) studied motivations for playing online games and grouped 10 components under three categories. The first, *Achievement component* (advancement, mechanics, competition), refers to the need for gaining power, mastering rules and systems, and challenging; *Social component* (socializing, relationship, teamwork) refers to the need for communicating with other players, building long-term meaningful relationship and being part of the team; and *Immersion component* (discovery, role-playing, customization, escapism) refers to the desire for exploring the unknown within the game world, engaging in the role-playing, and escaping from real life.

Self Determination Theory (SDT), another needs-based motivational theory that is developed more specifically for media and mass communication, addresses both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and is used by a range of scholars to explore game

players' motivation and experience. According to this theory, playing video games can satisfy the need for *competence* (challenges and feelings of effectance), *autonomy* (willingness of doing the task) and *relatedness* (feelings of being connected with others) (Ryan, Rigby&Przybylski, 2006; Johnson, Gardner&Sweetser, 2016).

Based on SDT, the Player Experience of Need Satisfaction (PENS) theory added two more variables to assess the play experience: *intuitive controls* (whether game controls make sense and are easily mastered) and *presence/immersion* (the sense of being in the game world, related to the Csikszentmihaly's concept of *flow*) (Ryan et al, 2006).

Ryan et al. (2006) conducted four studies to investigate motivation for playing computer games and the effects of gameplay on well-being. It was found that the three elements of SDT (competence, autonomy, and relatedness) independently predict enjoyment and future gameplay. A recent study by Johnson et al. (2016) also found that competence, autonomy, and relatedness were associated with more time spent playing. However, the result showed that flow and hours of play were not associated, and greater immersion was associated with fewer hours of play.

Ferguson and Olson (2013) conducted research to investigate what may drive children's interest in playing video games and found four motivations: (1) fun/challenge motivation: to have fun or enjoy being challenged; (2) catharsis/autonomy motivation: especially to reduce stress; (3) social relatedness motivation: to have social interaction with others; (4) boredom motivation: to fill time and avoid boredom. The first three motivations are consistent with SDT, while the fourth suggests that sometimes children play video games not because they are engaged with them, but because they don't have much else to do. The result also indicated that males show a stronger preference for violent games than females, and that it is more common for males to be driven by the first three motivations.

Among other reasons, video games are attractive to adolescents because they provide a safe, private laboratory for to experience emotions (both positive and negative) and the construction of identities. Through video games, especially games with violent content, young gamers can (1) enjoy the pleasant emotional experience, (2) explore emotions that are controversial in ordinary life and (3) intensify mutual bonds with their friends by experiencing particular emotions together (Jansz, 2005).

As is evident from the above, there are various motivations for children as well as young adults to play video games, and boys more easily attracted by video games than girls. Video games may fulfil the emotional or social needs of children, and have become companions in their daily lives.

2.3 Impact of video games

Nowadays, it is almost impossible for a child to live without any video game contact. Although some of the children are not heavily into video games, they play them from time to time and hear about games from their peers. Therefore, video games have an important impact on children's lives and development, and parents are more concerned about the possible influences of video games on their children.

A considerable number of studies into the effects and impacts of video games on children and young adults have been conducted by scholars in the media field. On one

hand, many researchers have stated that video games have positive effects and great potential to benefit players. On the other hand, some researchers are highly concerned that video games, especially the violent content which most video games include (Gentile, Lynch, Linder et al., 2004), may have negative influences.

2.3.1 Positive impact of video games

Many studies have shown that video games can have positive influences on players. With the development of game technology and content, game playing is no longer only a way to relax and entertain. In various fields including education and healthcare, video games have brought positive results.

Physical health and benefits

The rise of active video games makes it possible to integrate play with exercise. Graf Pratt, Hester and Short (2009) studied the new generation of video games that require interactive physical activity. In their research, active video game playing was compared to walking, with the result showing that the energy expenditure during play is similar or even greater to moderate-intensity walking. Active video games provide a new possibility to help children increase energy and be more physically active.

Research conducted by Penko and Barkley (2010) comes to a similar result, proving that physically active video games have the potential to increase children's daily, moderate-intensity physical activity. However, the result also indicates that the intensity is not great enough to alter cardiorespiratory fitness in healthy children, and it is not recommended to use active games to replace traditional physical activity.

Additionally, video games have great potential to benefit physical therapy (Lee&Peng, 2006), health care and rehabilitation (Griffiths, 2002). Video games can be designed and used as a tool for health education and physical education which "may positively influence young people's' knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours in relation to health and physical exercise (Papastergiou, 2009, p 613)." According to Papastergiou, although there is limited empirical evidence to support the effectiveness of video game playing in health education and physical education, previous studies indicate that it is reasonable to be optimistic.

Psychological and social effects

Griffiths (2010) discussed several positive effects of video games, including making people feel psychologically better. According to the author, gaming can help people deal with pressure and strains in daily life by offering players an immersive and dissociative experience. For children undergoing painful medical procedures, video games are helpful as a tool to distract and relax them (Kirsch, 2010). Dill and Dill (1999) pointed out that video games have great potential for therapy. Gardner (1991) used video games in psychotherapy with children and argued that psychotherapy sessions with the application of video games are actually more successful than the traditional technique. In addition to this, video games provide a virtual and safe space where youth can experience various emotions and identities, which may help young gamers have a better understanding of self and emotions in real life (Jansz, 2005).

Social reward is also a crucial reason for people to engage in leisure activities such as video game playing (Griffiths, 2010). It is proven that games have a positive influence on friendship building, and a third of online game players become good friends in the game (Cole&Griffith, 2007). Lee and Peng (2006) reviewed several studies with the conclusion that children who play video games more frequently showed higher sociability than non-players and enjoyed friendship equally to less frequent players. Studies by Greitemeyer and Osswald (2009) as well as Gentile et al. (2009) indicate that video games can be used as an effective tool to increase children's pre-social behaviour in the short and long-term (Anderson&Warburton, 2012). Straker, Abbott, Collins et al. (2014) argue that there is a positive association between children's video game playing and their social interaction with friends and family, and that games with fun elements may have a positive psychosocial influence on children.

Education and skill development

Video games have great potential for education and learning process, especially when designed to address a problem or teach a skill. For children, video games can be a tool in childhood education that makes education more attractive (Griffiths, 2002). Research shows that video games can benefit learning, motivation and retention memory.

A considerable amount of literature has shown that video games have positive effects on children's skill development. Pillay (2003) argued that game playing requires certain cognitive skills such as proactive and recursive thinking, systematic organization of information, interpretation of visual information, general search heuristics, means-ends analysis, and so forth. The hypothesis that playing games can help children gain cognitive skills has been supported by empirical evidence, and studies have shown that the cognitive skills developed in game playing can be transferable to other tasks (Lee&Peng, 2006).

An experimental study by Chuang and Chen (2007) also supported the argument that video games have a positive influence on children's cognitive learning. By playing video games, students can improve their fact/recall processes as well as problem-solving skills.

Dill and Dill (1999) argued that increased video game playing is associated with better eye-hand coordination and visual-spatial ability. In the review by Lee and Peng (2006), however, the authors pointed out that effects of video games on spatial skills are mixed, with the reason why game playing can improve spatial skills still being unclear.

Video games can be used for educating special need groups such as children who have severe mental disorders or severe developmental problems. Studies showed that video game playing has the potential to benefit the development of language skills, basic math skills, basic reading skills and social skills. Video games linked to brain-wave biofeedback can be used to help children with attention deficit disorders (Griffiths, 2002).

Although the impacts of game playing on academic performances are mixed (Lee&Peng, 2006), there is evidence that games have potential to enhance achievements within some subjects, especially math. Randel, Morris, Wetzel et al.

(1992) examined 68 studies to look at the differences between games/simulations and conventional classroom instruction. Seven out of eight studies found that the use of games was significantly positive for improving mathematic achievements, while five out of six studies showed that games are an effective tool for language art education. However, games didn't make differences in most of the studies on social sciences education. Studies also show that games show greater retention over time and are more interesting than traditional classroom instruction.

2.3.2 The negative impact of video games

Despite the positive effects and great potential, video games can bring negative impacts especially when game content is not prosocial (Griffiths, 2002). Gosselt, Van Hoof and De Jong (2012) documented the negative effects of harmful media content and divided them into two types. The short-term effects include violent behaviour, prime aggressive cognitions, arousal and an aggressive affective state, while the long-term exposure to harmful media content gives youth a systematic learning process of taking aggressive behaviours as normal and reduces emotional sensitivity. Additionally, previous researches have shown that there are other risks and negative effects of video games, such as addiction and lower academic records.

Aggression and violence

According to Anderson and Warburton (2012), playing video games is associated with aggression on the short and long term. Anderson and Bushman (2001) argued that violent media including violent games increase aggression in several ways: it can teach users how to aggress, prime aggressive cognitions, increase arousal and create an aggressive affective state. Both experimental and nonexperimental studies showed that the combination of short-term and long-term learning processes results in a positive correlation between violent media exposure and aggressive violent behaviour.

Gentile et al. (2004) also declared that adolescents who were exposed to high levels of video game violence were more hostile and more likely to be involved in arguments with teachers, as well as in physical fights. A study by Gentile and Gentile (2008) showed that violent video games can exemplify and teach aggression. They argued, however, that the correlation between video games and aggression does not mean that playing violent video games caused the changes in aggressive cognition and behaviour.

Dill and Dill (1999) discussed the relationship between violent game playing and aggression from a theoretical perspective. Based on media violence literature, the authors argued that the impacts of video-game violence operate through priming and elaboration of aggressive thought networks, weakening of inhibitions against antisocial behaviour, modelling and reinforcement, decreased empathy and a more violent worldview. Although Catharsis theory suggested that engaging in aggressive behaviour can actually decrease aggressive energy or desires and therefore lead to a reduction in subsequent aggressive behaviour, the hypothesis is not supported by studies.

Also from a theoretical perspective, Lee and Peng (2006) documented three theories to explain the negative effects of violent entertainment games. 1) *Social Cognitive Theory* suggests that during game playing, players tend to identify themselves with the

game characters, making it easy for symbolic violence to be internalized by players and substantially transferred to the real world. 2) *Excitation Transfer Theory* indicates that the excitement from previous playing may intensify a later emotional state of a game player. 3) Theory of *Priming Effects* argues that violent game playing increases accessibility to aggressive and violent cognitions which can be transferred to aggressive behaviours in real life.

However, experimental studies about the negative impacts of violence games on variables such as aggressive thoughts, behaviours and physiological arousal showed mixed results (Lee&Peng, 2006). A research overview by Ferguson (2011) showed that although there are several short-term studies by scholars such as Anderson et al. (2008) and Shibuya et al. (2008) that indicate effects, the results of most studies taken together are inconsistent and limited, and so far, no solid evidence can prove a long-term relationship between video game violence use and subsequent aggression. According to the author, the divergence in findings from various studies are, to some extent, caused by methods and measures. Researches that use greater statistical controls for third variables proved weaker harmful effects. Besides, aggression measures are not fully developed in terms of clinical validity of serious aggression or violence in real life, which is also a limitation in some previous studies (Ferguson, 2011).

Ferguson and Kilburn (2010) also argued that there is a bias in this research field, with the result of their research showing that the impact of violent video games on serious acts of aggression or violence is minimal, although the influence of "small" petty violence is significant.

Addiction

According to Gentile, Choo, Liau et al. (2011), most researchers hold the opinion that pathological video game use, commonly called video game "addiction", is somehow similar to other behaviours such as pathological gambling. Although game playing is not initially pathological, it becomes so when the behaviour turns dysfunctional and harms players' social, occupational, family, school and psychological functioning. However, the authors also stated that there is still a debate on the definition of addictions, including behaviour addictions.

Gentile et al. argued that greater amounts of gaming, lower social competence, and greater impulsivity can increase the risk of individuals becoming pathological gamers and to suffer from depression, anxiety, and social phobias. The dysfunction can have a long-term duration and is not solely a symptom of co-morbid disorders.

Through a study on player and ex-players of *EverQuest*, Chappell, Eatough, Davies et al. (2006) also found that individuals who are 'addicted' to games show core components of addiction such as salience, mood modification, tolerance and conflict, which means that the nature of being 'addicted' to games is similar to alcohol or gambling addiction.

The study revealed that both adult and adolescent high engagement players show some negative consequences in their life, and online gaming addiction is a reality for them. But the authors also suggested that it could be a functional retribution that the individuals use the 'addiction' narrative to pathologize their behaviour and elevate self-

blame, and the boundary between non-pathological high engagement and addiction is actually blurring (Chappell et al., 2006).

Although there is some anecdotal evidence of how game playing results in 'addictive' behaviours and therefore leads to negative outcomes such as irrational spending of money or health issues, Lee and Peng argued that current studies are somewhat limited in terms of generalizability, and there is no consistent support for the hypothesis of game addiction (Lee&Peng, 2006).

Researchers such as Shotton (1989) suggested that the term 'dependency' is more proper than 'addiction' to describe an individual for whom gaming is more than a preoccupation and serves special social and psychological functions. According to Griffith and Hunt (1998), children who began gaming earlier are more likely to be playing at "dependent" levels (cited in Lee&Peng, 2006).

Social isolating

Among other negative effects, one of the main concerns about computers as well as video games is that young users may tend to be socially isolated as a result of spending a great amount of time playing games (Orleans&Laney, 2000).

In the academic field, social isolation was widely studied as one of the serious negative effects of gaming in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Lee&Peng, 2006). Nowadays, the debate continues, and some studies have shown opposite results.

Williams, Yee and Caplan (2008) stated that the use of isolating technology is increasing, users tend to spend less time with friends and family, and a popular stereotype of game players is that they spend too much time indoors and are socially isolated and lonely. However, two self-reported surveys of MMO players (Griffiths, Davies&Chappell, 2004; Yee, 2006) showed the opposite: these players are more social than the stereotype indicates. Other studies also found that there are family-like dynamics and active ecologies among players. During their gaming activities, players build social networks and form inner circles where members interact as "a family" (Taylor, 2003, 2006; Castronova, 2005, cited in Williams et al., 2008).

Orleans and Laney (2000) emphasized that gaming itself has a social dimension. It provides a topic of discourse and a frame of ordinary communication, and young gamers often play games together and network. Their research did not find that computer use including gaming resulted in isolation and social decay. Lee and Peng hold a similar opinion, that recent research showed game playing is not significantly associated with social isolation (Lee&Peng, 2006).

Health issues

Frequent gaming may be associated with health problems. Studies show that young game players have complained of eyestrain, headaches, chest pain, fatigue and mood swings (Tazawa et al., 1997, cited in Mitchell&Savill-Smith, 2004). Other physical health problems such as tendonitis and repetitive strain injury are also considered being associated with extensive computer game playing. There are additional reports of gamers experiencing seizures while playing. This may be due to the user sitting too close to the screen or activating factors such as sleep deprivation and emotional

excitement. (Mitchell&Savill-Smith, 2004).

In addition, since game players tend to spend a long time sitting in front of the screen, the lack of outdoor activities will also affect players' physical health and development (Lee&Peng, 2006). However, some scholars also suggested that gaming is comparable to a mild-intensity exercise and normal use of video games may neither improve nor harm physical fitness (Mitchell&Savill-Smith, 2004).

Straker et al. (2014) found that children who play video games in their bedrooms experience low quality of sleep. Playing video games after bed time also increases the risk of sleeping less. Moreover, playing video games is associate with an unhealthy lifestyles and poorer subjective health. It has been found that children who spend time on small screens such as smartphone and tablet may be at greater risk of vision problems, though the related studies are small and dated.

When it comes to mental health, a considerable amount of literature shows that game players are mentally less healthy (Williams et al., 2008) and have more complaints about problems such as depression and addiction (Mitchell&Savill-Smith, 2004). Self-esteem is also a widely discussed issue related to computer game playing. Studies show that games can provide a temporary sense of mastery, control, and achievement and raise self-esteem, although heavy use of video games is associated with more negative effects, such as lower self-esteem (Roe&Muijs, 1998). Fling, Smith, Rodriguez et al. (1992) argued that the relationship between self-esteem and video-game playing may be complex and the results depend on the length of exposure to video games or game-playing success. Low-esteem could motivate game playing because of the desire to gain a sense of mastery, while frequent playing might bring a sense of accomplishment and therefore raise self-esteem.

Academic performance

Gentile et al. (2004) found that heavier video game use is associated with a decline in the levels of school achievements including grades. It is also mentioned by Gentile et al. (2011) and Anderson and Warburton (2012) that, according to the result of their experimental studies, students who play a larger amount of video games are more likely to have lower grades. Although gaming may not be the sole reason that leads to poorer school performance, it is proven by experiments that a large amount of video game use has a significant correlation with adolescents' achievements in school.

A review by Mitchell and Savill-Smith (2004) also documented that frequent gaming reduces the time for doing homework and encourages a preference for iconic representation than rather reading.

Moreover, video games may make children too excitable which influences education negatively, and the rapid change of video game technology makes the evaluation of educational impact hard. Also, it will skew results when the participant's performance on other games are enhanced only because of video game experience and practice (Griffiths, 2002).

Some scholars, however, argued that the results of research into the negative effects of video games on school performance are mixed, and recent studies showed no significant correlation between game playing and poorer academic performance

(Lee&Peng, 2006; Mitchell&Savill-Smith, 2004). Moreover, some surveys indicated that in several measurements, computer game players scored better (Lee&Peng, 2006). As mentioned above, video games even have great potential to benefit education, so it is hard to conclude the effect of video game playing on school performance.

As evidenced by the above, video games may have negative effects on players, including violence, aggression, isolating, addiction, health problems, and, in some cases, poorer academic achievements. However, although online gaming can be problematic to some people, for most individuals it is enjoyable and harmless to play online games (Gosselt et al. 2012). Possible negative effects may become a cause of concern for parents. According to Lee and Chae (2012), parents who think their children lack proper self-regulation struggle to prevent their children from the harmful impact of gaming. Therefore, they may need assistance in mediation. In many countries, institutions and organizations provide information for parents, and governments also help parents to protect children from the harmful effects of video games by means of laws, regulations or rating systems.

2.4 Europe rating system and Chinese regulation

With such a wide and varied amount of video games on the market, it is unsurprising that parents may have concerns and struggles in monitoring, guiding and protecting their children. It is not easy to decide what kinds of games parents should allow their children to play. To regulate the game industry and provide information for parents, governments and professional institutions in many countries have launched various policies, regulations or rating systems. By studying the systems and regulations in the Netherlands and China, it is possible to observe the kind of information, support or guidance parents can get from the government and professional institutions, and how this can possibly influence parents' attitude towards their children's video game use.

2.4.1 PEGI system

To protect young people from harmful media content, multi-levelled public and private regulations including international, regional, and national legislation, self-regulation, funding, and distribution of information are developed and formulate the basis of age rating and warning label systems (Gosselt et al., 2012).

Nowadays, various rating systems exist in many countries to protect children from harmful media content. By labelling media products such as films, videos, and computer games, rating systems can inform parents whether the content is appropriate for their children. Focusing on video games, the Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) system was launched in 2003 and replaced various national systems in 30 European countries including the Netherlands.

The PEGI system is a self-regulation based on national classification systems (Gosselt et al., 2012). As can be seen from its website *pegi.info.nl*, there are two main types of labels shown on the front and back of packaging: age classifications (3,7,12,16,18) and descriptors that explain why a game has received a particular age rating (*bad language, discrimination, drugs, fear, gambling, sex, violence, online*

gameplay with other people). In addition to this, the PEGI OK label was developed to indicate that certain small games on websites and online services are suitable for all age groups.

In March 2015 the PEGI rating system expanded to mobile and digital storefronts in Europe via International Age Rating Coalition (IARC), a process created by a global coalition of game classification authorized to provide age rating for digitally delivered games and mobile apps.[2]

The PEGI system is voluntary, however many video game publishers tend to make sure that the products are rated by PEGI before being put on the European market. Besides, PEGI is also a useful system that provides information and assistance to parents, helping them make decisions on purchasing or downloading certain games for children (Wilcox, 2011). Based on PEGI age ratings, parental control systems are included in all game consoles, handheld game devices, and operating systems, which enable parents to protect children by selecting video games, restrict or block digital purchases, limit access to the internet browser, and control the amount of gaming time and level of online interaction.

In the Netherlands, many parents think that age rating is necessary for them to protect their children by being informed about harmful content in video games (Nikken, Jansz&Schouwstra, 2007). The acceptance of the PEGI rating system keeps growing and, according to Gosselt et al. (2012), half of Dutch parents surveyed in 2008 said the system is either extremely or very useful.

On the other hand, a research conducted by Bijvank, Konijn, Bushman et al. (2009) found the result that age and violent-content labels of PEGI system actually highlight video games with objectionable content and may trigger a forbidden fruit effect. The research involved 310 Dutch young participants, and all three age groups (7-8, 16-17, 18+) showed increased curiosity and interest in games with PEGI labels. The authors thereby suggested that parents should not allow children to buy their own games. Through a mystery shopping study, Gosselt et al. (2012) also found that it is quite easy for youth to obtain a game which is suitable for an older age. However, another experiment found that children are not more interested in games with higher ratings when more realistic materials were shown (Gosselt, De Jong&Van Hoof, 2012).

2.4.2 Chinese regulation of video games

Differentiating from the Netherlands, China mainly relies on laws, policies, and regulations to protect children and youth from the harmful effects of media products including video games.

To enter the market, video games need to be approved by the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People's Republic of China (SAPPRFT), formerly known as the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT). With certain criteria, SAPPRFT will examine game design, main tasks and narratives, and decide whether a video game can be released on the Chinese

[2] See PEGI *Rating Expand to Mobile via New Global Rating System*, pegi.info, http://www.pegi.info/en/index/id/1068/nid/50, and *Expands to Mobile Via New Global Initiative*, isfe.eu, http://www.isfe.eu/about-isfe/news/pegi-expands-mobile-new-global-initiative

market. Though harmful content such as violence and sex are taken into consideration, it seems that more attention is given to restricting unfavourable depictions of the Chinese government to make sure that the game will not harm national unity or violate public morality (Wilcox, 2011). Besides, the criteria are not specialized for various age groups.

Over several decades, the Chinese government has established a series of policies and regulations to control the video game industry and protect young gamers. For example, in 2000 the government announced a policy that arcade game rooms could not admit teenagers on school days, and the open time was limited to 16 hours per day (Cao&Downing, 2008). In 2004, online game content screening policies were announced to prohibit the importation of online games that violate the basic principles of the Chinese Constitution; threaten national unity, sovereignty, or territorial integrity; divulge state secrets; threaten state security; damage the nation's glory; disturb social order; or infringe on the legitimate rights of others (Wilcox, 2011).

Among other political and economic reasons, the policies are also impacted by social concerns about the negative effects that video games may cause. Main social concerns voiced by parents and teachers have included: 1) concerns that online games affect studies, 2) concerns about addiction, and 3) concerns about the social impact of online games on moral values and association with violence. To some extent, their social concerns pushed the Chinese government to announce policies and regulations for purposes of controlling play time, creating "green" online games and prohibiting gambling related aspects, violence as well as other game design features for minors (Ernkvist&Ström, 2008).

Apart from governmental regulations, a self-regulation agreement was published by Chinese Game Publishers Association with some articles about what kinds of content are encouraged and what is restricted, roughly translated as follows:

"Corporations and individuals in the game industry must not produce or sale game products that contain obscenity, pornography, gambling, excessive violence, and superstition, because it may lead to improper political tendencies or harm national security."

"Corporations and individuals in the game industry should protect the minor's physical and mental health. They should comply with the regulation on children and youth entering entertainment locations and should set warnings and other tools to protect consumers from long-time playing and addiction."

In the last few years, there are an increasing number of voices on Chinese social media calling for the introduction of a rating system for media products including video games in China. In 2004, China Youth Association for Network Development (CYAND) announced a series of suggested standards of "green" online games, including a five-level age rating system (all age groups, 12, 16, 18 and danger content). However, it was did not appeal to manufacturers and players. Parents also showed a pessimistic attitude toward the system because they think it won't change the situation[3]. The Chinese

[3] See the serial report (in Chinese) on http://tech.sina.com.cn/focus/GAME_123/

government also shows a passive attitude toward the establishment of age rating system. In 2010, the Ministry of Culture made an official announcement that a rating system for online games is not on its agenda[4]. Currently, the only age-related regulation is a content warning for users under 18 that can be seen on the websites of some online games.

In general, it may be difficult for Chinese parents to have a clear and full picture of policies and regulations about video games since many articles are separated in various laws. Besides, it is difficult to find institutional instructions on how to protect children from the harmful effects of video games, as well as on how to guide children's game behaviour. There are no influential websites or other media channels that specifically focus on parental mediation. As a result, parents who originally come from China may be less aware of the information on how to protect their children from negative media effects under the guidance of government and scientific research.

2.5 Parental mediation and video games

As previously mentioned, many parents are worrying to varying degrees about their children's use of digital media and want to impose restrictions or guidance on them. "All the activities that parents are involved in when guiding their children's media use (Nikken, 2012, p 3)" are termed as *parental mediation*. The following sections will briefly review different types of parental mediation strategies, as well as the associations between parents' background, attitudes, and parenting strategies regarding video games.

2.5.1 Categories of parental mediation

As the media environment has become more complex, parents tend to be more nervous about how to guide their children to use media and protect them from harmful effects (Livingstone, Mascheroni, Dreier et al., 2015). Along with the development of media and video games, theories about parental mediation have been argued in the media field.

Based on earlier studies on parental mediation for television, scholars have studied several main categories of parental mediation strategies which can be applied to all types of media.

Active mediation: Parents talk about media content while the child is engaging with the medium.

Restrictive mediation: Parents set rules to restrict children's use of the medium, including time, place and content, without discussing the meaning or effects of the restricted content.

Co-using: Parents remains present while the child is using the medium, sharing the experience without commenting on the content or its effects (Livingstone&Helsper, 2008).

When it comes to parental mediation for video games, co-using is also stated as *co-playing*. Video games are more interactive than television. Moreover, as children prefer

[4] See the report on government website of China (in Chinese), http://www.gov.cn/jrzg/2010-01/27/content_1521110.htm

playing video games with peers instead of parents, video games are less intergenerational. As a result, though parental mediation for television and video games share some similarities, there are also differences. For example, in the case of video games, the relationship between beliefs about media effects and mediation are much weaker, and parents' tended to use restrictive mediation rather than active mediation and co-playing(Nikken&Jansz, 2006).

Participatory learning: In the contemporary media environment, children can start using media, including video games, at a very young age, and the use of digital media has become more interactive than traditional media. Because of this change, a new strategy called participatory learning has been discussed in media and game studies (Nikken, 2017). This strategy highlights the two-way and children-centered interactions between parents and children in their media use (Clark, 2011). With and through digital media, parents and children interact equally, and the focus of parental mediation is not only their child's use of media and the effects media may bring, but also the relationship between children and the world that is built through digital media (Nikken, 2017).

Focusing on the internet and mobile media, Livingstone et al. (2015) identified a theory of five main parental mediation strategies.

Active mediation of internet use: practices such as talking about internet content and online activities, sitting nearby while the child is online and actively sharing the child's online experiences.

Active mediation of internet safety: activities and recommendations aimed at promoting safer and responsible uses of the internet.

Restrictive mediation: setting rules that limit time spent online, the location of use, as well as content and activities.

Technical restrictions: the use of software and technical tools to filter, restrict and monitor children's online activities.

Monitoring: checking up on children's online practices after use.

2.5.2 Parents' attitude towards video games

Because of the new media environment with more screens, more functionalities, more mobile use and technically advanced media, it is increasingly hard for parents to use media together with children and guide children's media behaviour. According to Clark (2011), new media devices and functions have changed people's way of communication and interaction. As a result, parent's mediation might have to change into participatory learning that "involves parents and children interacting together with and through digital media" (p 1). Researchers such as Nikken (2012) and Delfos (2013) have also stated the importance of parents' involvement in the contemporary media environment - many parents, however, are still struggled in applying the strategy and are in need of more information and efforts.

In previous studies, scholars argued that parental attitudes and behaviors towards children's game playing differ between parents with different background and socioeconomic status.

According to Rideout (2015), parents with a higher level of education and income are less likely to be reported as knowing "a lot" about children's media use. For instance,

62% of higher-income tweens (8-12 years old) report that their parents know “a lot” about the video games they play, while the figure for lower-income tweens is 73%.

Nikken et al. (2007) mentioned that parents with a higher level of education hold a more negative attitude toward gaming. The attitude of parents with experience in gaming is more positive. Also, parents of girls play games with their children more frequently than parents of boys do. Valkenburg (1999) argued that parents with a higher level of education and younger children are more in favor of restrictive and instructive mediation.

When parents are concerned about the negative media effects on children’s behaviour, they become more restrictive and evaluative. On the other hand, when parents approve the positive social-emotional effects of gaming, they play more often with their children (Nikken&Jansz, 2006).

2.6 Chinese culture, parenting and video games

Although currently living in the Netherlands, Dutch-Chinese parents and children are influenced by their Chinese cultural background, which might make their parenting different from Dutch parents. This thesis will also explore how Chinese culture influences parents’ attitude towards children’s playing of video games, the way they communicate with their children, and their strategy of parental mediation. At the end of this section, a short conclusion will be drawn and there will be some hypotheses based on the theories that were discussed in the previous text.

Among other cultural factors, Confucius’s five cardinal relations between sovereign and minister, father and son, husband and wife, old and young, and friends were highly valued in China through history, which has made China an authoritarian society. In traditional Chinese families, parental authority is absolutely respected and children are educated to obey their parents without expressing conflicting ideas (Chan&McNeal, 2003). Though its society and culture are rapidly changing, a lot of Chinese parents are still largely influenced by traditional rules based on Confucianism.

Unlike European and American culture, which values the independency of individuals, the culture of east Asia, including China, emphasizes the importance of the family and interdependency in the family. Parents and other elder members in the family have greater authority than younger family members. The culture suggests that it is parents’ responsibly to guide, educate and control their children, not only when the children are young, but also when they grow into adults. In return, children should obey their parents and work hard to meet parents’ expectations. The traditional way of parenting in east Asia tends to be interpreted as overcontrolling, overprotective and harsh, however, studies also show that contemporary Asian parents, especially mothers, do not impose absolute control. Immigrant Chinese mothers reported that they prefer to guide their children instead of harshly control them (Chao&Tseng, 2002).

In terms of family communication patterns which have an important influence on parenting, Chan and McNeal (2003) found that Chinese parents demonstrated a higher social-oriented communication, which emphasizes parental control and children’s deference to authority. Based on this theory, it can be assumed that Chinese parents use more restrictive mediation in video game playing than Dutch parents. Chan and McNeal

also mentioned that products that have a negative impact on children's academic achievements are highly forbidden by Chinese parents, while products improving study and intelligence are encouraged.

It is a common phenomenon in China that parents, as well as teachers, are highly concerned about children's academic achievements in school and expect children to put more attention on studying instead of playing (Li, 2001). According to Ernkvist and Ström (2008), a large proportion of Chinese parents and teachers are concerned that playing video games is overly time-consuming and distracts children and youth from their study. Many of them also see video games as a threat that can lead children to an unhealthy environment. Thus, the impact of video games on the study could be one of the most crucial measurements for Chinese parents to decide whether or not they like it. Looking back to earlier days when the manufacturers promoted their games consoles as education aids, the products occupied the market rapidly (Cao&Downing, 2008). However, as the universal of video games, a lot of Chinese parents began to see video games as a threat that occupies too much of their children's time and removes them from studies (Ernkvist&Ström, 2008). Nowadays, with the development of educational games, Chinese parents' attitude toward educational video games could be more positive if they have a full awareness of this genre.

According to Davey (2008), Chinese parents' attitude is also influenced by their background. For example, compared to parents in the rural area, urban parents have more concerns about children's media use. Most urban parents set rules and regulations on watching television and surfing the internet as well as playing computer games. Thus, there is often an assumption that parents who originally come from the urban area of China will show a stricter attitude toward children's video game playing.

In recent years, video games are getting more popular among children, and parents' attitudes toward gaming are varied. Chinese parents usually have high academic expectations for children and tend to set stricter rules in the family. They may show a negative attitude towards the possible harmful effects of gaming, especially the effect on school performance. If this is true for Dutch Chinese parents, it will also be interesting to see the reasons.

Both the positive and negative impacts of video games on children and youth are widely discussed in the academic field, but the question is: do Dutch Chinese parents really have a good understanding of effects? According to my communication with them, some of these parents' attitude, especially negative attitudes towards video games, are predominantly built on experience and impression rather than scientific guidance. This aspect will also be looked at in the thesis.

To protect children from the negative effects of video games, the Dutch government has introduced the PEGI rating system to inform of harmful content, and parents can also use parental controls or child locks to restrict children's playing time. In China, there are laws and policies to regulate the game industry and to restrict young players, but it is hard and inconvenient for parents to access this information. Dutch-Chinese parents have experience in both countries, and therefore it would be interesting to observe to what extent they are aware of Chinese laws and policies, as well as of the

Dutch rating system.

Due to different cultural backgrounds, there may be differences between Dutch parents and those who are originally from China in terms of mediation strategies. Also, Dutch-Chinese parents with different backgrounds may also have different attitudes toward video games and apply different mediation strategies. Although there is literature about how culture influences Chinese parents to guide children, studies about parental mediation and video games in China are still limited. During the research, the impact of culture, as well as other factors, will be further investigated.

Since these parents are influenced by both Chinese culture and Dutch society, this research will also investigate the possible association between the parents' attitude and their level of social integration. It will also examine whether Chinese parents who stay in the Netherlands for a longer time and have a higher level of integration are more relaxed regarding children's playing of video games.

Chapter 3 Methodology

In daily life, both Chinese and Dutch parents have various experiences and opinions regarding children's playing of video games. Through semi-structured interviews, this research explores parents' personal thoughts, awareness and method of parenting with the purpose of answering the research question: **What is Dutch Chinese parents' attitude towards children's playing of video games, and why?**

SQ 1: What factors are associated with Dutch Chinese parents' attitude toward video games (e.g. social-economic status, the level of social integration)?

SQ 2: To what extent are Dutch Chinese parents aware of the positive and negative effects of video games on children?

SQ 3: To what extent do Dutch Chinese parents apply mediation under professional guidance (e.g. get suggestions from institutions/websites…)?

SQ 4: To what extent do Dutch Chinese parents use PEGI system?

3.1 Semi-structured in-depth interview

Semi-structured in-depth interviews are chosen method for this study to obtain detailed insights into Dutch-Chinese parents' attitudes and opinions toward video games, and the reasons behind their views.

In-depth interviews are widely used in qualitative research to investigate shared understandings of a particular group. They can provide a rich and in-depth set of data about the experiences (DiGicco-Bloom&Grabtree, 2006), motivations and opinions of others (Rubin&Rubin, 2011). Unlike ordinary conversations, interviews usually focus on a research question and pursue it in depth. By talking to the interviewees who provide their experiences and understandings in the interest of the research project, researchers can explore various perspectives toward an issue. This approach provides a helpful way for researchers to reconstruct events they have never experienced and "allows the researcher to explore complex, contradictory, or counterintuitive matters"

(Rubin&Rubin, 2011, p.4).

In-depth interviews are commonly applied in many research fields such as education, marketing, nursing, health, ethnic studies, communication (Rubin&Rubin, 2011) as well as media studies (Jensen, 2013). They can be loosely categorized as unstructured, semi-structured and structured.

Some scholars argue that no interview is truly unstructured because even the most unstructured interviews are conducted with some sense of themes (DiGicco-Bloom&Grabtree, 2006; Legard,Keegan&Ward, 2003). An unstructured interview is defined as "conversation with a purpose" (Webb&Webb, 1932, p.130). It follows a free format, making the interviewee feel relaxed and unassessed (Qu&Dumay, 2011), and is usually combined with the collection of observational data (DiGicco-Bloom&Grabtree, 2006).

On the contrary, a structured interview is "where the interviewer asks interviewees a series of pre-established questions, allowing only a limited number of response categories" (Qu&Dumay, 2011, p.244). The same questions are asked in the same order (Qu&Dumay, 2011), and this method often produces quantitative data (DiGicco-Bloom&Grabtree, 2006). Among the three formats, semi-structured is most commonly used in qualitative research. Such interviews are organized around a set of pre-established questions with the open possibility to add other questions during the conversation between interviewer and interviewee (DiGicco-Bloom&Grabtree, 2006).

Semi-structured is often considered to be the most effective and convenient method of gathering information in specific cases and themes. It is useful for studies on "complex behaviors, opinions, emotions and affects, and for collecting diversity of experiences (Clifford, Cope&Gillespie et al., 2016, pp. 152-153)." This method enjoys such popularity due to its many advantages, including being flexible, accessible, intelligible and capable of revealing hidden facets of human behavior (Kvale&Brinkmann, 2009). During a semi-structured interview, interviewees can provide information in their own language and express understandings of the social world from their own perspective; whilst the interviewer can evoke detailed and full answers by modifying the style, pace, and ordering of questions. Through complex interpersonal interaction, both interviewer and interviewee participate in the interview and produce questions and answers (Qu&Dumay, 2011).

Like any other research method, however, a semi-structured interview also has its limitations. Thomas Diefenbach (2008) discussed the possible weaknesses of qualitative research that is mainly based on semi-structured interviews. According to the author, the research design may be problematic because the research question and methods still lack precision, and will be affected by the researcher's theoretical position, interests, and political perspective.

Then, during the data collecting phrase, the investigation and interviewee selection does not happen systematically and objectively. As a source of information, interviewees are not reliable as they may make conscious and deliberate attempts to mislead the interviewer and may be influenced by the interview situation.

The internal validity of data and the external validity of the findings are low, because the interview data is not sufficient due to the quality, quantity or the time frame it covers,

and the objective criteria for the selection, grouping, and interpretation of the data is lacking. Also, the findings cannot be tested or replicated, and are not representative and cannot be generalized.

Despite the limitations and potential problems, a semi-structured interveiw is still a reasonable method for investigating parental attitudes, experience and opinions about their children's playing of video games. In this study, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted during the research period. By talking to Chinese parents living in the Netherlands as well as local Dutch parents, experiences, opinions, and understandings about video games were collected as the qualitative data of the research.

3.2 Research Procedure

3.2.1 Participant approaching

According to DiGicco-Bloom and Grabtree (2006), in-depth interviews are aimed at exploring shared understandings of a particular group, and therefore the sample should be fairly homogenous. On the other hand, a demographically and geographically heterogeneous sample may be included in qualitative research that in need of cross-cultural comparison (Robinson, 2014). Based on the research question of this study, the main sample universe was defined as Chinese parents living in the Netherlands with children aged around 8-14. During the interview, however, some parents brought additional information about their other children who are older or younger. Also, a small number of Dutch parents with children in the same age range were involved as the comparison group to see if there is any cultural difference that impacts the attitude towards video games.

Due to the volume and schedule of the study, 11 interviews were conducted with 12 interviewees including 9 Chinese parents living in the Netherlands and 3 local Dutch parents. Interviewees were recruited mainly through two ways: network and Chinese school in Rotterdam. In the original plan, the network was the first choice to approach potential interviewees. However, it was more difficult than expected at the beginning because most of the parents who were contacted have children either too old or too young for the study. Only two Chinese parents (a couple) was interviewed initially start, and since they do not know any other parents with children in the right age group, the "snowball sampling" did not work.

While I kept asking friends to see if they had suitable contacts, the Chinese school was tried as the second plan as it was a gathering place for Chinese parents and was easily accessible. A visit was paid to Dan Hua Chinese school, one of the largest Chinese schools located in Rotterdam. In the end, two Chinese parents and one Dutch parent were willing to participate as interviewees. Later, another 5 Chinese parents and one Dutch parent were introduced by several Dutch-Chinese friends, and the last Dutch interviewee was found with the help of the supervisor.

Due to the limited time and scale of this research, the result will provide only some insights of the parents' attitude towards children's video-game playing, which may not be representative. Further research could involve more interviewees and use quantitative method for data collection.

3.2.2 Data collection & analysis

Qualitative interviews can be conducted in the form of group or individual (Qu&Dumay, 2011). Most of the interviews in this study were individual face-to-face interviews. The first interview was conducted with two interviewees, with the purpose of testing how it would it be to conduct a dialogue with a couple together. However, it turned out that sometimes the husband and wife's opinions were mutually influenced. Although it could be an interesting way to see the idea of the family, this research prefers to be more focused on individual opinions, and later interviews were adjusted to be individual. Considering the participants' preference, availability, and convenience, another interview was done by a call through WeChat, a messaging and calling app which is popular among Chinese users.

The interviews lasted for around one hour at locations convenient for the interviewees where they felt comfortable and relaxed. Among the ten face-to-face interviews, four were at café chosen by the interviewees; two were at the reception room of the interviewee's workplace, one at the interviewee's house, and the three interviewees recruited from the Chinese school were interviewed in the reception room of the school.

Question list & material

Interviewing is described as "the art of questioning and interpreting the answers" (Qu&Dumay, 2011, p.242), and it requires "careful planning and sufficient preparation" (p.239). Before the interviews took place, a list of questions (see below the English version) was prepared based on the research question, sub-questions, and previous theoretical study. During the semi-structured interviews, this list was used flexibly as a framework and guideline, and other questions were added according to interviewees' responses.

The first interview with the Chinese couple was conducted as a trial, after which the question list was slightly modified and was followed by most of the later interviews. However, for the 5th interview with a Chinese parent who does not allow children to play video games at all, some of the pre-established questions were not suitable anymore, so the second half part of this interview went more unstructured.

Additionally, as the study involves participants' knowledge and attitude towards the PEGI game system, the age labels and content descriptions were printed on a paper that was later shown to the interviewees. With this material, interviewees could directly see whether they are familiar with the system. For the interviewees who are not aware of PEGI, this is effective because the interviewer only needs to ask "Do you know these labels and descriptions" without much additional explanation.

The pre-established questions are as follows:

1. General information

-Hometown, education level, occupation, income, etc.
-When did you come to the Netherlands?
-How many years have you been in the Netherlands?
-How many children, age, gender, grade, etc.?

2. Parents' attitudes toward video games and factors associated with their attitude.

-Do you play games yourself? How does it feel? Why do you like / not like playing?
-Does your child(ren) play video games?
-If yes, what games? How many hours per day?
-What do you think of the amount of time?
-If no, is there any reason behind it?
-How important do you think that child(ren)'s school performance is?
-What is the relationship between study and game playing?

3. Parents' awareness of the positive and negative impacts of video games on children.

-What do you think are the impacts of video games on children?
- How do you guide your child(ren) and prevent them from harmful impacts?

4. Types of parental mediation applied, and their knowledge about mediation and children's education.

-Do you set rules for child(ren)'s game playing?
-If yes, what rules?
-If no, why?
-Are you there when your child(ren) is playing games?
-Do you play video games with your child(ren)?
-Do you talk with your children about the games?
-If yes, what kind of talk is it?
-If no, why?
-Do you search or ask for advice/help regarding your child's game playing?
-If yes, from where/whom?
-If no, why?

5. Dutch Chinese parents' use of PEGI system.

-Do you know these labels (showing PEGI age and content labels for games)
-If yes, how do you use this rating system?
-What do you think of this rating system?
-If no, (how) do you check whether the games are appropriate for your children?

Language of the interviews

This study involves both Chinese and Dutch participants, so the choice of language was carefully considered before the interviews started.

For interviews with Dutch participants, the interviewer was not able to conduct in-depth conversations in Dutch. When the interviewer and interviewees do not share the same language, problems may arise because different languages organize and express different realities (Kapborg&Berterö, 2002). In the end, a compromised solution was reached, that the interviews with Dutch participants were conducted in English.

Using an interpreter and conducting the interviews in Dutch and Chinese was also considered, however, the transcripts would be mainly in Dutch and would need to be translated into English for analyzing, which is too inefficient for a study with limited time and resources. Although there was a concern that using the second language instead of mother language may cause additional communication barriers to the interview, this was not a real problem because most Dutch people have a good command of English and are comfortable to using it. In addition, to make sure that the interviews went smoothly, in the participant-approaching period the interviewer confirmed with the interviewees that they were comfortable having a conversation in English.

Moreover, in a study where researchers interviewed Cantonese women in Chinese and English, the result showed that using a bilingual informant during in-depth interviews did not make a significant difference to data analysis. Therefore, using a different language in the interviews doesn't affect the validity and reliability of data (Kapborg&Berterö, 2002).

Besides the Dutch participants, the majority of interviewees for this study were Chinese parents living in the Netherlands. In order to maintain consistency of language in all the interviews, English was also considered as a choice for talking with Chinese interviewees. However, some of the Chinese parents were not able to or not comfortable speaking English, and it seemed illogical to disregard the language that both interviewees and interviewer are most familiar with, so the interviews with them were conducted in Chinese.

Analysis

All of the 11 interviews were audio recorded by mobile phone or recording pen, and additional notes were taken during the interviews. After the interviews were finished, the conversations were transcribed into digital documents and preliminarily reviewed as the main material for later analysis. To avoid the subtle change of meaning during translating or the situation that some words cannot be translated from Chinese into English, the transcriptions were analyzed in their original languages without translation.

According to Boeije (2010), the analysis of data contains two basic activities: segmenting and reassembling. During semi-structured interviews, it happens frequently that interviewees do not answer the questions in a straightforward way and sometimes they talk about things in a different order. It is also common that interviewees jump to different topics when answering one question. Therefore, the relevant information for a question can be found in different places. By segmenting and reassembling, the data is cut into pieces and then put together under different categories in order to answer the research question.

In this study, the process of analysis is divided into three phases: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. During the open coding phase, the transcriptions were read sentence by sentence, and the text was cut into fragments and marked by labels and notes. Then, the fragments were compared and grouped based on the subjects. Each subject is labelled with a code. Two transcriptions of Chinese interviewees and one of Dutch interviewee were used as a test to identify the basic codes. After that, other

transcriptions were analysed and the codes were continually adjusted.

The second phase is axial coding. During this period, the data set was reorganized and the codes were modified, merged or removed. In the meantime, categories and sub-categories were developed and connected on the basis of the research question. It is also the phase to identify which codes and elements are more important than the others. By doing that, initial patterns and concepts were gradually developed.

Then, in the selective coding phase, the categories were carefully selected and core categories were developed into concepts. The data was put together again in a systematic and structured way and the relationship between different categories was analysed in order to find the patterns and build final theory.

Based on the research question and sub-questions, more attention was paid to data that 1) is important for answering the research question; 2) connects to the literature; 3) shows rich and deep insights of the interviewees; 4) shows surprising, fascinating and original facts, ideas or opinions; 5) is related to the social or scientific debates (Boeije, 2010). When the data was interpreted, it was treated as narratives in context instead of isolating segments. It is also an important principle to try to avoid bias and unbalanced interpretation and not to exaggerate or ignore the interviewees' opinion or attitude on the purpose of proofing the hypothesis.

During the process of analysing, Chinese parents and Dutch parents were continually compared. According to the arguments that were mentioned in the previous chapter, Chinese parents and Dutch parents may have many differences when they raise their children. For instance, the attitude towards children's study and the way of communication. To make a clear picture of the differences as well as the similarities, when a certain code or category includes both data of Chinese parents and Dutch parents, the relevant fragments were marked separately as *CN group* and *NL group*. In addition to this, Chinese parents who married Dutch partners were also analysed as the *cross-culture family group* and were compared with *Chinese family* group too see how Dutch society and culture influence Chinese parents.

According to the ethical principle of research interviews, the form and purpose of the study and how the data would be used were explained to the participants when the interviewers approached them. Before the interviews began, the interviewer explained the study in detail again. The interviewer also asked the interviewees' permission to record the conversation in advance.

All the interviewees stay anonymized in transcriptions, notes, and the final paper, and their identifying information such as names, addresses, education institutions and working places, are not disclosed. As DiGicco-Bloom and Grabtree (2006) stated, "the anonymity of the interviewee in relation to the information shared must be maintained" (p 319).

3.2.3 Participant overview

During the interviewing period, 11 interviews were conducted and 12 interviewees participated. 9 of the interviewees are Chinese, and 3 are local Dutch. Their backgrounds are diverse, and a brief description is as follows. The number is based on the order of the interview.

Interviewee 1a comes from a small city in southeast China, where she finished her high school. In 2011, she came to the Netherlands to reunite with her husband and has stayed in the country for six years. For most of the time she is a house wife, but she also does part-time jobs occasionally. Interviewee 1a has two daughters who were born and grew up in China and are currently studying at secondary schools in the Netherlands. They both play small games on their mobile phones for about half an hour per day. Interviewee 1a thinks that school is the most important thing for her children and has a very high expectation of their grades. In general, she holds the opinion that gaming is not a positive activity but allows her children to play a little bit to relax. The interviewee doesn't set strict rules for children's gaming, and don't know the labels of PEGI rating system.

Interviewee 1b is the husband of interviewee 1a. They come from the same city in China, and the husband's education level is also high school. He came to the Netherlands in 2003 and has been working as a cook since then. The interviewee doesn't have much experience with video games and has quit playing because of his busy job. For the same reason, he doesn't have much time for parental mediation though he holds a relatively negative attitude towards video games. Like his wife, the interviewee also thinks that study is the most important thing for the children. However, he doesn't have the same high grade requirements\\\. Interviewee 1b doesn't know PEGI rating system for games but recognize the age labels on television programmers and films.

Interviewee 2 was born in a middle city in Jiangsu province, southeast China, and lived and worked in many other cities. She got her bachelor's degree in China and married her Dutch husband and settled in the Netherlands in 2002. After coming to the Netherlands, she gave up her old profession and became a freelance artist. She also volunteers teaching Chinese at a Dutch school. Her son was born in the Netherlands and plays video games for 0.5-1 hour per school day and 2 hours per day during holidays. The devices he uses include computer, mobile phone, Wii and PlayStation. The interviewee does not play games at all and thinks that her child spends too much time gaming. Her attitude towards video games is mostly negative, and she tries to set restrictions. On the one hand, she finds it difficult to persuade her son; on the other, she feels that her husband is more relaxed on this issue, so she is working hard to find a balance in between. Because of her immigrant identity she often feels a lack of knowledge to help her guide her child in the Netherlands. She attaches much importance to her child's schoolwork but thinks that she is more relaxed than parents in China. Interviewee 2 is not familiar with PEGI game labels and only has a vague impression that they are on the boxes of games.

Interviewee 3 lived in a big city in west China before coming to the Netherlands in 2003. She graduated from a hogeschool (vocational college in Dutch) and now works as a freelance dance teacher. The interviewee established a family with a local Dutch

man and has two daughters. The younger daughter's age does not fit this study, so her information was not collected. The elder usually plays games on her mobile phone and iPad for about 2 hours per working day and 4 hours in holidays. The interviewee is not satisfied with this amount of time and hopes her daughter could play less. However, she believes her attitude toward video games is neutral. The interviewee places restrictions on her daughter's gaming and gives some guidance. Although she considers study to be the most important task for children, she has no specific requirements on grades and claims that her strictness is different from "typical Chinese parents". As a Chinese person living in the Netherlands, she thinks that Dutch culture has influenced her a lot and that her attitude and method of parenting are somehow in between. Interviewee 3 is aware of the PEGI game system and uses it as a reference when the labels are easily seen. However, PEGI is not the main resource she uses to check whether the game is suitable for her daughter. More often, she asks the child directly about the game to make a judgement.

Interviewee 4 is a Dutch father with a Chinese wife and two daughters. With a local bachelor's degree, he is currently working as an engineer. His wife teaches in a Chinese school and has a high expectation of their children's school performance. Compared to her, the interviewee is less strict regarding their children's study but is more conscious of their gaming activities. The two girls play video games on mobile phones and computers. If the weather is fine, they play one hour a day; if not, the playing time extends to 2-2.5 hours. The interviewee played games in the past, but now he only helps his two daughters play their games from time to time. He has many positive impressions of video games, but at the same time very careful about the safety on the Internet. To prevent his children from potential harm, he talks a lot with the girls about the risks and set a series of rules to keep them safe. There are also restrictions on playing time. He is aware of the PEGI system and refers to both film labels and game labels. In his opinion, PEGI is a good reference but is stricter than his own standards, so he uses it with flexibility.

Interviewee 5 comes from a big city in China and has studied and worked in several European countries for 30 years. He did an MBA in France and now resides in the Netherlands as a start-up. The interviewee's wife is also from China, and the couple has a son and two little daughters who are not in the age range of this study. For his son, gaming is strictly forbidden, at least at his current age, because both the interviewee and his wife hold the opinion that video gaming is very harmful to children's eyes and intelligence development. They also feel that there is a high risk of becoming addicted. Influenced by his parents, the interviewee formed an impression at an early age that video games are only for bad children. However, he claims that his attitude towards video games is actually neutral, and what really matters is the time, age and way of playing. If his son has grown up and is really interested in video games, he hopes that the child can be creative and develop games instead of simply play. The interviewee doesn't have specific requirements about his son's school achievements but expects the child to work hard and learn more. Since the interviewee doesn't currently allow the

child to play video games at all, it is not surprising that he is not aware of the PEGI game system and has a misunderstanding that the age rating is based on the games' complexity and children's capability.

Interviewee 6 is a local Dutch man with two bachelor's degrees who works as a manager. He married a Dutch wife and has two sons who play computer games or Wii about 2 hours per school day and 3 hours per day on weekends. Interviewee 6 also plays games from time to time, but in general he was slightly against video games. Some rules and restrictions were set based on discussion between the father and the sons, however, the interviewee still finds it very difficult to control his children's playing time. He believes study is important and expects his sons to get a score of no less than 7. As for the PEGI system, he looks at both age and content labels and is more familiar with the age ranges that his sons fit in than the other. Sometimes he is unclear about the rating, but does not check for further information. Despite the doubts, he thinks that PEGI is an important help.

Interviewee 7 is a Chinese mother who came to the Netherlands in 2007 to do her Ph.D., and she is currently working as a project manager in a Dutch company. Her husband is from another city in middle China, and their only daughter was born in China and came to the Netherlands to attend primary school. The girl plays small iPad games infrequently (5-10 minutes a time, not daily), but this activity is not encouraged by both her parents. The interviewee is not a gamer and she feels that she has a neutral attitude towards video games, although she still does not want her daughter to play because of a risk to eyesight, wasting time, and the possibility of addition. She has a very high expectation of her daughter's school performance and gives the girl additional homework, as she feels that Dutch schools do not provide a sufficient amount or difficulty of work. The interviewee thinks the PEGI game system is not necessary for her since all the games her child plays are very safe.

Interviewee 8 is an accountant originally from a big city in middle China. She came to the Netherlands in 1998 and obtained her bachelor's degree from a hogeschool. The interviewee has one daughter and two sons, all of whom were born in the Netherlands. The girl does not play video games much, while the boys play 0.5-1 hour per school day and 3 hours per day on weekends. Some restrictions have been set, but she finds that the boys always play over their set limit. Although the interviewee herself is not interested in video games, she holds a neutral attitude and allows the children to play so long as it does not affect study or become an addiction. The devices they use include iPad, Wii, and PlayStation, and the computer is not allowed because the interviewee thinks that playing online is very risky and hard to control. She also feels that sitting too close to the computer screen is harmful to eyes. The interviewee thinks that Chinese parents located in the Netherlands tend to be more relaxed than those who are living in China because of different social and cultural environment. Thus, she does not give additional homework to her children though she still hopes for high scores. The interviewee uses PEGI as a point of reference but has not searched information on

PEGI's website. Like interviewee 5, she also thinks that the age level is somehow based on games' and children's capability.

Interviewee 9 grew up in a big city in southeast China and came to the Netherlands in 2007 for her master's studies. After graduating, she worked in the media field for a few years and then began a start-up. Her husband is Dutch, and both of their sons were born in the Netherlands. This study focuses on her elder son, who plays video games under certain rules. The boy is allowed to play every day during holidays and two days per week during school terms, and the average playing time is 1-1.5 hours. The devices used include iPad, computer and game consoles. She holds a relaxed attitude towards both children's study and game playing and thinks that video games are positive. However, this doesn't mean there are no requirements about school performances. As an immigrant, she feels that many of her values and opinions have been influenced by the Dutch society and culture. Through learning from both sides, she formed her own way of parenting. Sometimes, she plays games together with the boy and enjoys this activity. Nevertheless, she is aware of the risks and takes some actions to protect her son. The interviewee thinks that PEGI is a good and convenient system but feels that the age rating does not have to be strictly applied, and parents need to have a look at their children and make their own decisions.

Interviewee 10 came to the Netherlands with her parents in 1995. She went back to Taiwan and studied there for eight years, and after finishing her master's, returned to the Netherlands and took over her family career as an acupuncturist. Her husband is also from Taiwan, and they have a little daughter who was born in the Netherlands. The interviewee does not play video games at all and holds a negative attitude towards them. She pays great attention to her child's education and currently does not allow her daughter to play video games. However, she thinks traditional non-digital games are positive and can benefit children's development. From her perspective, all the positive effects video games may have can also be gained from traditional games, and video games have the potential to be far more harmful than traditional games. Thus, she does not encourage parents to buy video games for children under 18 years old. The interviewee is not in need of PEGI game system, so she does not recognize the labels and has never used them.

Interviewee 11 is a Dutch mother with two sons who play video games for about 1-3 hours per school day and 5 hours per day on holidays. She is not certain how long they spend on games, however, because sometimes she does not see them playing. The boys play games on computers, iPad, Wii or PlayStation, and the interviewee finds it very difficult to control the time. She tends to have a negative attitude towards video games but can understand that times have changed, and that it is normal for children to be attracted to video games. She has had some conversations with her children and set some rules. Although she is not always there to watch her boys playing, she comes to their rooms from time to time. The interviewee has been working for education and research institutions. She thinks study is important but not the most crucial thing for

children and tries to guide her children with an open attitude. However, she also admits that sometimes it is complicated to help them to find a balance between play and study. Though the interviewee is aware of PEGI game system, usually she does not use it because her ex-husband and boyfriend have already checked the labels.

Table 1: General information of interviewees and their children

Interviewee	1a	1b	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Gender	F	M	F	F	M	M	M	M	F	F	F	F
Education	High school, CN	High school, CN	Bachelor, CN	Bachelor, NL	Bachelor, NL	MBA, FR	Bachelor, NL	PhD, NL	Bachelor, NL	Master, NL	Master, CN	University*, NL
Family income/year(EUR)	30,000-40,000	30,000-40,000	30,000-40,000	30,000-40,000	60,000-70,000	*	60,000-70,000	40,000-50,000	40,000-50,000	60,000-70,000	60,000-70,000	30,000-40,000
Home country	CN	CN	CN	CN	NL	CN	NL	CN	CN	CN	CN	NL
Years in NL (only for CN group)	6	14	15	14		12		10	19	17	4	
Cross-cultural relationship	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
Gaming Experience	N	Y	N	Y(little)	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y(little)
Children												
Amount	2	Same with 1a	1	2	2	3	2	1	3	2	1	2
Age	16/14		13	10/4	10/7	6/2/2	15/9	7	13/10/8	10/6	7	13/12
Gender	F/F		M	F/F	F/F	M/F/F	M/M	F	F/M/M	M/M	F	M/M
Years in NL (only for CN group)	8/6		Born in NL	Born in NL		Born in NL		4	Born in NL	Born in NL	Born in NL	
Gaming Experience	Y/Y		Y	Y	Y/Y	N/N/N	Y/Y	Y(little)	Y(little)/Y/Y	Y/Y	N	Y/Y

*=Not Sure/Prefer not to answer, CN=China, NL=Netherlands, M=Male, F=Female, Y=Yes, N=No

Chapter 4 Result

4.1 Overview of parents' attitude

4.1.1 Chinese parents' general attitude

During the interviews, nine Chinese parents showed diverse attitudes toward children's playing of video games with a tendency to be more negative. One interviewee claimed her attitude was positive (interviewee 9), two interviewees hold a neutral opinion (interviewee3,8), and the other six declared a negative attitude (interviewee 1a,1b,2,5,7,10). However, when looking into the detailed opinions given by the interviewees, it appears that their attitude is actually mixed, and there is no absolute support or rejection. Parents with the positive attitude also have concerns about negative impacts, and most parents with the negative attitude admit that playing video games can bring children some benefits. Moreover, many Chinese parents, including those who chose the negative side, think video games itself is not necessarily a harmful thing, but they prefer their children not to play them too often.

Positive attitude

Interviewee 9 is the only Chinese parent who has declared a positive attitude towards video games. She is not a heavy gamer herself but has many opportunities to experience games because some of her friends and relatives are designers of visual reality games. By experiencing the games, she thinks video games are increasingly becoming a technological innovation, and combine good illustration and music, giving players both physical and emotional experiences. She also feels that video games have been developed and applied in a diversified way.

"As far as I know, many game developers and designers in the Netherlands have combined gaming with medical treatment to help people who are physically or mentally injured, especially children[…] if you guide your child well, video game is something belongs to the future."

For Interviewee 9, playing videos game is a way of relaxing and entertaining, and many of the games are interesting. She is more positive towards innovative and well-designed games than traditional games in which "you just conquer some difficulties," because the latter "seems not advanced enough". However, she feels that some old-fashioned games also provide good entertainment because "sometimes it is also nice to do something that doesn't require too much effort or engagement".

She highly supports the concept of "learn by playing" and thinks both "game" and "play" are positive terms. "I got this idea from the Dutch people," she said, "time has changed, and game-playing is no longer a waste of time or a worthless thing. There is no way to stop people from gaming for it has become a part of our life." In her point of view, children can gain knowledge and skills from gaming. For example, her son has developed an interest in architecture by playing *Minecraft*, not to mention *Squla*, which is designed with the purpose of helping children's study. Moreover, she thinks gaming can be something more than playing. "I also see it as a practice of time management, and I help my son arrange his studying and playing time properly."

Holding a positive attitude towards video games doesn't mean that interviewee 9

ignores the potential risks. Like other interviewees, she also has concerns, especially towards time control and network security. “When my son is playing games online, he may meet someone who is totally a stranger. But it’s not only about gaming, it’s about the general using of the internet, we need to be careful all the time.”

Neutral attitude

On the issue about children’s video game playing, interviewee 3 and 8 stand in the neutral position.

Interviewee 3 thinks children should play video games because they need to keep up with the development of society and technology. “It’s worth trying. Some games are really nice and interesting, and if you find the game is not good, you can always delete it easily.” She encourages children to play educational games such as *Squla* and will search for similar games and recommend these. For entertainment games, her attitude is neither encouraging nor objective, so long as the playing time is under control and the children’s study is not affected. Nonetheless, the interviewee does have some concerns about gaming. For example, she worries that gaming may harm children’s eyesight. Network security and privacy are also among her main concerns.

Interviewee 8 sees video game playing as a way of relaxing that should neither be encouraged nor be rejected. “It’s fine for children to play video games and have some fun, especially when other children come over, and the children can play together.” Like interviewee 3, interviewee 8 thinks game playing is acceptable under the conditions that the children have finished their homework and play for a controlled period of time. Online computer games are forbidden because interviewee 8 worries that “children may see something not proper, and it’s too hard to control when they are on the internet”. The interviewee also has a concern that computer gaming may harm eyesight. Thus, she prefers her children to play on the television with a bigger screen, with the children sitting on the couch to keep distance from the screen.

Negative attitude

Chinese parents who hold a negative attitude towards children’s game-playing are interviewee 1a, 1b, 2, 5 and 10.

Interviewee 1a is not a strong objector to children’s game-playing, but she still thinks it is slightly negative. The primary reason she gives is that playing video games is a waste of time and can easily make children obsessed. She said that her children do not have much time for gaming. “To play big and complex games, you need to learn first, and that requires time. If my children had time, maybe we’ll let them play, but they have to put more time on their Dutch and English because their language levels are not as good as local students. They also learn French, Germany, and Spanish. Playing a little bit is fine, but study is the most important thing.”

Interviewee 1b agrees with his wife that it’s permissible to play video games from time to time as a leisure activity, but study and physical exercise must be prioritized. “Children can learn things by playing games. Their fingers are very nimble. Some games make people smarter, which is good, but it’s worthless to play games in which there are only fighting and killings. I hope my children put more time on what they

should do in their age. Studying is the first, exercising is the second, and then a little playing."

For interviewee 2, playing video games is also a waste of time, and she hopes her son uses the time to do something else. Besides distracting the child from his study, game playing has occupied the time for communication between family members, and sometimes even causes conflicts. "My opinion is that you've already used your computer for a long time to do your homework, so when you rest, you should leave the computer and do something else, for example, fetching a cup of tea for mum or eating some fruits. Staring at the screen is not resting. But he insists that his teacher says they can do whatever they like as a rest, which includes playing video games." However, in most cases, she chooses to respect her son even though she does not agree with his opinion.

Interviewee 5 showed a stronger negative attitude than the previous three parents and does not allow children to play video games at all. Influenced by his parents, he formed the impression that playing video games is an activity for "bad" children. Since then he has gradually realized that video gaming does not have exclusively negative effects, but still insists that children aged under six should not play because "it is harmful to children's eyesight and intellectual development." Also, he feels that it's not creative enough to play in a visual world that has been pre-established and designed. He would allow his children to play video games when they grow older, however, this is more about sharing the same interest as peers. "As a parent, I don't want my children to play video games. But if they are old enough and do show an interest towards video games, I hope they would be creative and even develop their own games. Never just stupid play or get addiction."

Interviewee 7's opinion is that video gaming itself is not a negative thing and that she feels neutral about it, and although she'd prefer her children not to play, it's not absolutely forbidden. She stated three main reasons: firstly, it's not good for the eyesight. She also sees it as a waste of time, and hopes her child would spend the gaming time watching Dutch animations or studying. "We don't speak Dutch at home and schools in the Netherlands are not as intense and strict as in China, so my child's Dutch cannot be very good and needs to be strengthened. Besides, the math they learn at school is not hard enough, so I give her extra learning tasks. She is also interested in piano and taking lessons regularly, so doesn't really have time for gaming." Moreover, the interviewee is concerned about addiction. Influenced by news reports and some acquaintances, she has formed the impression that in most cases gaming will result in addiction and has decided that "there is no need to try that out". During the interview she also commented that playing video games is "meaningless", so it could be concluded that interviewee 7's attitude towards video game itself may be neutral, but her attitude towards her children's gaming activity is negative.

Interviewee 10 also forbids her daughter to play video games and suggests that children's use of digital devices should be strictly limited before 18 years old. In addition to the widely shared opinion that video game is harmful to eyesight and brain development, her main complaint is that playing video games will negatively impact family atmosphere and relationship. In her childhood, she often saw her mother and

brother fighting with each other because of gaming, which upset her. “Video games have no warmth. I like traditional games such as chess because people can have a positive and warm communicate during their playing. Digital games are different. You only communicate through the screen and will ignore families beside you, which makes you cold. Families should always have something to talk with each other.”

4.1.2 Dutch parents’ general attitude

The NL group consists of three local Dutch parents: interviewee 4, 6 and 11.

Interviewee 4’s attitude is more positive than interviewee 6 and 11. According to him, there are both positive and negative facets of children’s playing of video games, and some good games are fun. Though he hopes that his daughters could play less and would rather see them reading a book, he feels that some games - especially educational ones- are fun. He pays great attention to the safety aspect of gaming. He also controls playing time and tries to make children do their homework first.

Interviewee 6 thinks he is “a little bit against” video games, but not so sure about it. “Generally I’m ok with it, and the thing is how to manage.” Sometimes he finds it difficult to put a stop to children’s gaming because they don’t want to lose scores by quitting in the middle. His main concerns about children’s playing of video games are time consumption and dependency, and he hopes children can “come up with other ideas than gaming”. He feels that video gaming “is not helping people to be more creative. But, on the other hand, some of those games ask for strategy, and that's also asking for creativity.”

Interviewee 10 is “generally negative” towards video games. She thinks her children have spent too much time gaming and hopes they do something else. Addiction is also a big concern for her. She describes some video games as “addiction machines with money” that are designed in a way “that you always want to do more”, and it’s complicated to help children find a good balance. She objects to the violence in video games such as law breaking and killing. On the other hand, she thinks times have changed, and that there are also positive games from which children can learn a lot, so she respects children’s interest in playing video games. “Just not too much”, she added.

4.1.3 Comparing Chinese and Dutch attitudes

As can be seen from the previous section, both the CN and NL groups have various attitudes toward children’s playing of video games, but a larger proportion of the parents tend to be negative. In some cases, parents’ attitudes toward video gaming itself and children’s playing activity are controversial. Among Chinese parents with the negative attitude, interviewee 5 and 7 declared a neutral attitude towards video game, but both insist there is no need for children to play video games. Despite the fact that they completely or almost completely forbid children’s game-playing activity, their attitude is regarded as negative.

Chinese parents who married Dutch partners seem more positive than the solely Chinese families. In the cross-cultural family group, interviewee 9 declared a positive attitude, and interviewee 3 is neutral. Interviewee 2 holds a negative attitude but respects her son and doesn’t strictly restrain the child’s playing activity. Thus, this

group is more relaxed in comparison to the Chinese family group.

During the interviews, all the parents discussed both positive and negative effects of video games, and many of these effects were given as important reasons why they hold a certain attitude. There is also a clear gap between parents' awareness of the effects of video games, and the focus of scientific research in games studies. Some of the effects given attention by scholars may not be that interesting to parents.

Among many positive effects that have been mentioned during the interviews, Chinese parents pay much more attention to the impacts on education and skill development than on other aspects. Although educational effects are also important for Dutch parents, they have a more balanced consideration of the other factors. This result shows that children's study and education are the most crucial things for Chinese parents.

In terms of mental effects, interviewee 9 is the only one who mentioned the use of video games in therapy, possibly because she worked in the media industry, and her acquaintance with game designers makes her more knowledgeable about the cutting-age development of video games. When it comes to the social effects, there is a significant difference between the CN group and the NL group: only Chinese parents mentioned the positive effect on the parent-children-relationship, while only Dutch parents talked about the effects on social skills. Though Chinese parents such as interviewee 3 and 9 demonstrated their awareness of the benefits of video-game-playing on children's social activities and behavior, it did not come to their mind when they were asked about the positive effects.

The positive impact of video-game-playing on physical health was the least mentioned by both Chinese and Dutch parents. Most of them do not see video gaming as an activity that benefits physical health. For those who mentioned the positive effect on physical health, they referred to a very specific type of video games. Interviewee 9 and 4 both gave the example of *Pokémon Go* and saw it as a good game because children are encouraged to play outdoors.

In comparison to the positive effects, parents gave more points about the negative effects of video game playing. According to parents' responses, education is still the most important aspect for both Chinese and Dutch parents, and the biggest concern is the extended play time which is hard to control.

Most of the Chinese parents are highly concerned about the possible harmful impact of video games on their children, and take it as one of the main reasons for objecting to children's playing activities. A possible reason is that a large proportion of Chinese children wear glasses. The latest figure shows that nearly 80% of Chinese urban children aged from 6 to 18 have weak eye sight, constituting the highest percentage in the world, and a popular explanation is that long study hours and screen time have caused this problem[5]. As they do not want to reduce children's study hours, limiting screen time is a reasonable reaction. Though the environment is different in the Netherlands and children do not have to spend as much time studying as students in China, most of the parents are still very careful about children's eye sight.

[5] See news report from People's Daily, http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-06/10/c_1121118897.htm(in Chinese)

Regarding the effects on social skills and behaviors, although Chinese parents did not mention the potential positive aspect, some of them, such as Interviewees 1a and 3, have opinions about the negative aspects and believe that children who play too much video games tend to be isolated. One area in which scientific studies are limited is the influence on family atmosphere and relationship. Both Chinese and Dutch parents have discussed the conflicts between parents and children when they have different opinions about video game playing. There are also conflicts between siblings when they play together.

Addiction, dependency, and violence were mentioned by parents from both groups. Though they agree that these are significant risks of video gaming, parents are not particularly worried as they believe their children are safety conscious and aware of their limits.

Internet safety is also mentioned by parents as a negative effect of video games, or more specific, online games. The existence of online games and communities makes the online environment far more complicated than traditional video games because, as Interviewee 8 said, "you don't know who you will meet in the game". Leaking of personal information is also a big concern among parents.

In conclusion, both Chinese parents and Dutch parents have provided some positive aspects of gaming. One difference is that Chinese parents are slightly more enthusiastic about discussing the ways video games can benefit children's study and development.

For both CN and NL group, time-consumption is the most widely mentioned reason for parents' negative attitudes towards their children's playing of video games. The difficulty in controlling children's playing time and safety is also a problem shared by both groups. However, Chinese parents seem more anxious about the negative influence on children's study and education than Dutch parents. Some of them forbid children to play video games or feel that their children have no time to waste on gaming, which was not found in the NL group.

The concern that video games are harmful to children's eyesight appears only in the CN group, and some Chinese parents also mentioned the harmfulness on children's brain development. Another difference is that the CN group seem to be more concerned that video games sometimes reduce the quality of family atmosphere and relationship.

During the interviews, it was found that most of the parents form their opinions through personal experience, communication with acquaintances, media reports or general articles about gaming and parenting on the internet. Even though some parents are highly-educated and carefully choose the resources, they are not in the habit of looking for professional scientific studies. The gap between scientific research and social awareness is still a problem that calls for more effective solutions.

4.2 Parental mediation

During the interviews, many parents expressed the opinion that children's gaming activity is very hard to control.

Some scholars argued that digital media is more personal and individual than traditional media (Delfos, 2013; Nikken&Jansz, 2013). In case of video games,

interviewee 8 said: “Parents’ cannot always see what children are doing because they play in their own bedroom.”

With the growing popularity of mobile media, it’s becoming more and more challenging to monitor gaming activity. Interviewee 11 said: “(in the past) they only had one device, and it was mine, and now they have their own phone, and their own PlayStation.” Interviewee 1a and 1b found it “impossible to control” because the children use their own smart phone and set passwords which parents do not know.

Even if parents and children are in the same room, children can still play in privacy with their own device, as Interviewee 2 describes: “my son got his own laptop when he started secondary school. In the past he used our computer, so we could watch him, now he is just sitting in the corner where no one else can see the screen, so it’s hard to know what he is doing.”

Moreover, the possibility of multitasking on one device has made it difficult for parents to know whether the children are playing games, watching videos or studying. Interviewee 6 gave the example that sometimes when he told his sons to stop gaming, the boys insisted that they are doing homework. Similar conversations also happened to many other parents.

Despite the difficulty, parents still try hard to protect and guide their children’s gaming, and various types of mediation strategies have been applied.

4.2.1 Parental mediation for video games

With regard with parental mediation on video games, Nikken and Jansz (2006) stated three main types: *restrictive mediation* refers to set rules to restrict children’s gaming activity, *active mediation* refers to talking about content when children are playing, and *co-playing* refers to playing together with children. All three types of mediation were found in this study, and as Nikken and Jansz discussed in their article, parents tend to use more restrictive mediation than active mediation and co-playing.

Restrictive mediation

As discussed in previous sections, two Chinese parents forbid children’s game playing activities: Interviewee 5 and Interviewee 10. The main reason they do it is concern about children’s eyesight and brain development, and as a result both of them restrained children’s contact with video games and gaming devices, objecting not only to gaming but also to watching others play.

Interviewee 5 mentioned during the interview that sometimes he found his son watching other children playing with game consoles during after-school care, which he very much objected to. Apart from telling his son not to engage with the console, Interviewee 5 also talked to the teacher at after-school care. Eventually, they reached the agreement that the teacher would try to keep his son away from the game console. If the boy has been with the console for 15 minutes, the teacher is instructed to divert the child’s attention. Similarly, Interviewee 10 also told her children not to watch their father playing games (the father is a gamer), and sends her daughter to a school that does not teach with iPads. Moreover, she deleted all the gaming apps on her own smart phone to prevent her children’s contact with games on that platform. Despite doing so,

she found her daughter playing on the iPad occasionally, and in some cases she would allow 15 minutes' playing. Thus, it appears that in the contemporary media environment, it is almost impossible to keep children away from video games entirely.

Other parents who allow children play video games, impose rules on various aspects such as time, device, content, location, and behavior.

1. Time

Most parents in this study impose restrictions on playing time, and they tend to allow longer time during weekends and holidays than school days. Interviewees 1a, 1b and 2 do not set particular rules but tell their children when they feel like they have been playing for too long. Parents such as Interviewees 3 and 11 are stricter on the use of games before bed time and do not allow children to bring smart phones to their room before they go to bed. For instance, Interviewee 11 said: "I'm very strict about an hour before sleep. I don't want you to do things on your devices because I think that your brain has to come to rest." Interview 3 has a similar rule that her daughters are not allowed to take devices to the bedroom before sleeping. However, she makes an exception for *Squla*, and sometimes her children will play half an hour and then go to bed.

The main difference between the CN group and NL group is the amount of time that parents allow children to play video games. Chinese parents set more strict restrictions on children's playing time than Dutch parents. For example, Interviewee 7 only allows 10 to 15 minutes, and Interviewee 9, in spite of her positive opinions towards video games, only allows her son to play on Tuesdays and Saturdays (or Sundays) in school term times. In the NL group, parents let children play every day and only have restrictions on the length of time.

According to parents' descriptions during the interviews, it is challenging to make children follow these time restrictions, though some children are more obedient than the others. Apart from the attraction of games, parents such as Interviewee 6 think it is hard to put a stop to their children's gaming process when they have not yet completed the level of the game they are currently playing, as they will lose scores. Interviewee 9 said that it is even more difficult to make children stop gaming when their friends are all online. Additionally, when parents discuss gaming times with their children, the children refer to the time limits that their peers have, which can make things more difficult because, as Interviewee 9 said, "some children play for a whole afternoon and their parents just don't care."

2. Device

Among parents who allow children's gaming activities, some have set restrictions on devices. In the CN group, Interviewee 8 does not want her children to play games on computers because she thinks sitting too close to the screen is harmful to their eyes. She also has a restriction on online games for safety risks: "You don't know what they will see and who they will meet on the internet." For the same reason, Interviewee 4 from the NL group also forbids his daughters from "spending too much time on computer."

3. Content

Most of the parents have a general, if not detailed, awareness of the type and content of video games their children are playing. For small, entertaining games, especially those on mobile devices, there are no particular rules. More attention is paid to risky content such as horror, violence, gambling, and drug-taking.

In the CN group, Interviewees 3, 7, 8 and 9 do not want their children to play games featuring horror and violence, and review the content before or after children get the games. Interviewees 1a, 1b and 2 usually do not check because they feel their children can make responsible judgements in the contents of the games they play. All three of these parents feel a lack of capability in guiding children's gaming behavior. To make a judgement, some parents use PEGI labels from time to time, and sometimes they ask children about the type and content of the games. Usually, if the children say that their classmates and friends are playing certain games, parents will allow their children to play as well.

The NL group seems to have slightly more concerns about violence than the CN group, but for the most part they are relaxed because their children have not engaged in games with too much violence.

4. Place

In this study, only Dutch parents have rules regarding location. Among parents of younger children, Interviewee 4 only allows them to play in the living room in order to be able to keep an eye on them. However, since his elder daughter has grown to 12 years old, "she is getting more privacy."

Unlike Interviewee 4, Interviewees 6 and 11 tend to ask their children to play in bedrooms so the parents won't be disturbed.

5. Behavior

In the CN group, Interviewees 1a and 1b do not allow children to spend money on games, whereas Interviewees 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9, say their children need to ask permission to purchase games. The same rule also applies for downloading games, but only Interviewee 7 is strict about this. Interviewees 3, 8 and 9 allow children to download free games, but will review the content later. In the NL group, children also have to consult their parents.

During the game playing, Interviewee 8 in the CN group does not want her children to argue with each other, and Interviewee 4 in the NL group asks his children to be well-mannered and refrain from bullying. "They are both very nice, so they don't do that. But if I caught them doing that I just cut off the internet."

Some parents, especially Interviewee 4, have rules about internet safety: for example children are not allowed to disclose personal information to strangers they meet in the game. Due to the volume of information given by the parents during the interviews, more details about parental mediation for online gaming will be discussed separately in the next section.

Active mediation

Active mediation is seldom used to guide children's gaming activities. Among all the parents who participated in this study, Interviewee 4 from the NL group is the only parent to frequently use this strategy. Due to his description of the strategy he applied, it appears that sometimes the active mediation is combined with restriction.

"There is always parental sight to the computers because I want to know what they are doing on the Internet. So, if they are going to the wrong channels, I can cut them off. The wrong people, if something happens, they can immediately come to me or my wife for support or protection. If somebody's mean to them, then they have somebody to help them immediately. So, it's making it safer to have guidance at their age."

In the CN group, parents are not in the habit of discussing games while their children are playing, and only Interviewee 9 discusses the content after their child has finished playing, if the content caused any issues. "Sometimes he was scared by some content such as zombies, then I'll explain to him because he'll have nightmare. I think our world is getting so crazy and the virtual products are developed more and more real. For children, the main thing is to let them know what's real and what's virtual."

Interviewee 2 is usually with her son in the living room but is unable to see what's going on since the boy sits in a corner where the screen cannot be seen by others. Other parents such as Interviewees 6 and 8 go to their children's bedroom to check on them from time to time, but usually don't discuss the game.

Interviewee 3 thinks there is no need for parents' presence if the rules have been well set. "At first I was there, and it took at least half a year for them (her children) to form the sense that they need to study and not to play even if mum's not here. Once the habit is formed, there is no need to be there."

Co-playing

Co-playing is uncommon for both the CN group and NL group. Interviewee 9 does it more often than the other Chinese parents and shows a particular interest in Wii. "I think it's fun. There is no purpose on education or protection, it's just a good way to build a nice family relationship. My husband plays a lot with my son, they are like friends or buddies, and my son thinks daddy is interesting. I'm a little envy about that and want to be an interesting mum and playmate, like his dad."

Sometimes, Interviewee 3 will join her children when she feels the game is interesting. Like Interviewee 9, this is motivated by the parents' own interest and relationship building, rather than protecting and guiding. She never proposes playing games together for entertainment but does for educational games such as *Squla*. Interviewee 8 also plays with her children occasionally, however when her children realize it does not interest her, they do not push her to join.

Among the Dutch parents, Interviewee 4 doesn't play with his daughters because the games are for young girls, although he does help when the girls have trouble in leveling up. Interviewee 6 also plays with his sons, but only on Wii. "That's something which you could do together and nicely. It's fun to do it together, to do things with your children". When the children "really want to be with their daddy, then, I think it's nice to see how they do it."

In summary, few parents in this study choose to play with their children, and for those who do, the main motivation is rather their own personal interest or family relationship building rather than protecting, guiding or educating children. Dutch parents seem slightly more enthusiastic than Chinese parents in playing together with the children, and parents with experience of gaming are more willing to join their kids.

4.2.2 Parental mediation for online gaming

Compared to other types of video games, online gaming has unique features that commands extra attention from parents. For example, children can communicate and interact with people they don't know in online games. Sometimes worries parents, as they don't know whether these people pose a threat to their child.

As mentioned previously, some parents gave detailed information about the parenting strategies they use specifically for online gaming. Due to the nature of the internet and online games, additional attention is given to internet safety, and technical tools are applied by some of the interviewees.

Livingstone and Helsper (2008) stated five types of parental mediation specifically in regard with the Internet use and mobile media, including: *active mediation of internet use, active mediation of internet safety, restrictive mediation, technical restrictions* and *monitoring.*

Interviewee 4 from the NL group uses both *active mediation of internet use* and *active mediation of internet safety*, mentioning internet content, online activities and safety issues when his children is online and offline.

Restrictive mediation is used more widely and frequently by both Chinese and Dutch parents. In the CN group, Interviewees 1a, 1b and 7 do not allow children to play "big online games". Interviewee 9 encourages her son to game online as little as possible and tells him not to disclose personal information to strangers he meets on the internet. In the NL group, Interviewee 4 also forbids his children from giving out personal information. He also sets rules about location: "I only allowed them to play in the living room. So, we will always have an eye on what's happening. The eldest one is 12 now so she's getting more privacy. But she earned it by being nice, so doing it well. The youngest one always plays in the living room."

Interviewee 9 in the CN group and Interviewees 4, 6, 11 in the NL group use *technical restrictions*. Technical protections are applied not only for gaming but also for general internet safety, although parents only set them on computers and laptops. As observed, all Dutch parents who participated in this study use software or other technical methods to filter harmful content on the internet and protect children. On the contrary, most of the Chinese parents have not introduced technical protections for internet safety. For those who forbid children to play online, there is no need to use such protections. The others such as Interviewees 2 and 3 have never thought to set technical restrictions.

The only parent who uses *monitoring* is Interviewee 9 from the CN group. Her son does not have his own iPad, so she allows him to use hers. Using the account which is also connected to her iPhone, she can monitor which games the boy has downloaded.

As can be seen from the above, restrictive mediation is still the most popular strategy for internet use and mobile media use, followed by technical restrictions, and the other

three types of mediation are seldom used. Unlike Dutch parents, Chinese parents also showed a very limited interest in technical restrictions. One possible reason is that technical protection tools are much less known in China than in the Netherlands, thus most of the Chinese parents do not have awareness or interest in them.

4.2.3 The way of parenting and communication

During the interviews, parents described various ways of communicating with their children about setting or maintaining rules on gaming.

In the CN group, Interviewees 1a, 1b and 2 feel unconfident in guiding their children. Although they would prefer children to play less and pay more attention to study or physical exercise, they do not impose strict restrictions, and instead give children more freedom with gaming. In terms of communication, 1a and 1b are more like traditional Chinese parents who want children to obey them, while Interviewee 2 is influenced by her Dutch husband and agrees that parents should respect children and make communication equal. However, she also experiences struggles: "We often say that Chinese mothers are 'tiger mothers', but they do cultivate children with remarkable achievements, so sometimes it's hard to say which way is better."

Like Interviewee 2, Interviewees 3 and 9 are also from cross-cultural families and expressed the same opinion during the interviews that their way of communicating with children is "between Chinese and Dutch". On one hand, they agree on open and equal parenting and communication, and think they are different from "typical Chinese parents". They are, however, less relaxed than the Dutch fathers. "Maybe because I'm Chinese," said Interviewee 9, "I always have concerns and want to protect."

Interviewee 8 also combines open conversation with strict control. For example, she will discuss with her sons how much gaming time they want, then if the boys play over this time and do not stop after the second reminder, she raises her voice and cuts the game off.

Interviewees 5 and 10 forbid children to play video games and are strict in this instance, but both have explained to their children why this is the case. Interviewee 7 also allows very limited playing time, and she is the only parent who gives children extra homework. In the way of communication, this group of parents shows greater authority.

Overall, Chinese parents who participated in this study think that although they are stricter than Dutch parents, there is a difference between them and parents in China. Many of them stated that they are not "that kind of Chinese parents", referring to a more old-fashioned way of parenting which emphasizes authority and takes school achievements as the only thing that matters. One of the reasons they provide is that the environment in the Netherlands is more relaxed and open. As Interviewee 1b said: "Things are different here. Children don't have to study all the time and parents are not that anxious." Another reason is the influence of Dutch people around them. The typical example is the cross-culture group, in which parents said they have been learning from Dutch society and combining values "from both sides".

In comparison, parents in the Dutch group tend to have more discussions with children than the CN group. Interviewees 4 and 6 are more strict than Interviewee 11,

but they all agree that communication is more effective than restriction. Though similar comments were also made by the CN group, stronger authority and control is showed in some, if not all, of the Chinese parents' practice. For example, Dutch parents are more willing to discuss playing time with their children and let them propose the rules, whereas a larger number of Chinese parents decide what's the best for children without asking.

4.3 Parents' awareness and use of PEGI

4.3.1 The awareness of PEGI

PEGI (Pan European Game Information) is an age rating system that is wildly used in the Netherlands for game content checking. In the CN group, some parents are more aware of PEGI than the others. Among the Chinese parents who didn't recognize PEGI labels are Interviewees 1a, 1b, 7 and 10, however, most of them are aware of age rating labels for films and TV programs. Interviewee 2 didn't recognize PEGI initially, but then said that she had seen the age labels on boxes of games. However, she is not aware of the content labels. Interviewee 5 is aware of PEGI labels but has the misconception that the age rating is based on children's capability and the games' complexity, "like the age labels on LEGO". Interviewee 8 is more familiar with age rating labels than previous interviewees and uses PEGI as a reference from time to time, but she also believes the age level somehow reflects the complexity of video games. Both Interviewees 3 and 9 are well aware of PEGI age and content labels, though the former takes it less seriously than the latter. Overall, it can be seen that parents from cross cultural families (Interviewees 2, 3, 9) have a better awareness of PEGI than those from Chinese families.

Parents in the NL group are more aware of PEGI than the Chinese parents, with all of them easily recognizing the labels. Interviewee 4 has a good understanding of the age rating systems of both the Netherlands and USA, but he puts more focus on films than games because he thinks the games his children are playing are not very risky. Interviewee 6 pays attention only to the age groups that concern him and is not so familiar with other age groups. Interviewee 11 has a habit to check age labels for films, but she doesn't use PEGI because in her family it is the father who usually monitors games.

The main difference here between Dutch and Chinese parents is that the Dutch parents grew up with an age rating system, while the Chinese parents claimed to learn of it or use it only after they came abroad. For Chinese parents, age rating systems including PEGI are not something they know by nature, so it's unsurprising that their awareness is lower than the Dutch parents.

4.3.2 Parents' use of PEGI

Interviewees 1a, 1b, 7 and 10 are unaware of PEGI therefore make no use of it. Among the five Chinese interviewees who are aware of PEGI, Interviewee 2 does not often use the system. She claims she trusts her son and thinks he will not play games with too much harmful content, although she feels a lack of capability in guiding children's gaming: "I don't know much about it, what I can do is take care of his life,

as for the other things, I just can't help." Interviewee 5 does not use PEGI either, simply because his son is prohibited from gaming and there is no need to introduce PEGI in their life. Interviewees 3, 8, and 9 use PEGI as a reference to protect children from games that do not suit their age. Sometimes they will check the labels before giving children the games, and Interviewees 8 and 9 use it more often than Interviewee 3.

In the NL group, Interviewees 4 and 6 use PEGI to check the age level and content of games. Interviewee 11 doesn't use PEGI because, as previously, the father always checks the games. However, she knows the system is there and would use PEGI if the father did not.

In general, the majority of parents who have experience with PEGI feel it's a good and useful system. Interviewee 9 said: "I trust this organization. The labels save a lot of time and efforts for parents because we don't have to check everything by ourselves. Besides, it's a good reference for children because they can see the age level and content warming when they are choosing games." Interviewee 3 feels less strongly about using PEGI but also thinks "it's good to have it here". Similar opinions are shared by other parents, however some of the Dutch parents also have critical comments. Interviewee 4 feels the gap between 3 and 7 is problematic in that it's a long period of child development, while Interviewee 6 finds it sometimes unclear why a game is put in a certain age level. "Sometimes I recognize it and I said, oh my god, the game is quite dark, but sometimes not, I think why is this 18 or why is this not 18?".

When parents use PEGI they usually see it as a reference and guideline instead of a strict standard. When there are doubts regarding the age rating, none of them consult to PEGI's website for further information. Furthermore, they don't see PEGI checking as an essential process. In some cases, parents only ask children or conduct an internet search to make their decision. For instance, Interviewee 3 in the CN group said: "I don't check the labels every time because I don't have time. Sometimes I just ask my child what the game is about."

Both Chinese and Dutch parents have their own standards to decide whether or not the game suits their children. Almost all of those who allow gaming have permitted their children to play games rated over their age. For example, Interviewee 8 once bought an "over-aged" game for her children: "It's a football game, so I think it doesn't matter. As long as the game is not too violent, I'm fine with it." Interviewee 9 started allowing her son to play games rated as 12 when the boy was 9 or 10 years old, but games rated 16 are forbidden. "Every child is different. You need to observe your children and make your own judgement." Interviewee 3 is more reliant on practice: "I'm not that strict on age. If you find the game is not good, you can always delete it."

4.4 Factors in relation to Chinese parents' attitude and behaviour

4.4.1 Factors about parents

From the perspective of socioeconomic statues (SES), Rideout (2015) argued that parents with a higher education level and income tend to have better understanding of children's media use. However, this result is not significantly shown in this study. Another argument in relation to SES is that higher educated parents have a more negative view of video games (Nikken et al. 2007). During the interviews of this study,

parents who hold the most negative attitudes and use the strictest restrictions are highly educated, such as Interviewees 5, 7 and 10. What should also be considered is that Interviewee 9, the parent with the most positive attitude, is also highly educated. Lower educated parents such as Interviewees 1a and 1b are not particularly negative, which is consistent with the literature. They are not very positive either, because just as they do not see many negative impacts on gaming, neither do they perceive the benefits of video games, especially the positive impact on education. Compared with highly educated parents their attitude-making is more passive, like Interviewee 1a commented: "I just let go, because I can't control my children and don't know much about games".

Another factor that may influence parents' attitude is their own experience of gaming. Not every parent who has more experience with video games is necessarily more positive than those who do not. However, what can be seen is that the strictest restraints are imposed by Interviewees 5, 7 and 10, all of whom have very limited gaming experience. They are all are deeply influenced by the negative experience or opinions about gaming during their childhood. Interviewees 5 and 7 grew up with the impression that "only bad children play video games", while Interviewee 10 has a bitter memory of the conflicts between her mother and brother about video games. On the contrary, Interviewee 9, the only parent who shows a positive attitude towards children's gaming activities, has more experience and better understanding of video games, and is more willing to co-play with children.

Integration and cultural influence are also important factors. Chinese parents who live longer in the Netherlands and are better integrated in Dutch society show a less negative attitude towards children's playing of video games. Even though many of them also expressed negative opinions, they use fewer restrictions. For example, the cross-cultural family group (Interviewees 2, 3, 9) is not as strict as the Chinese family group (Interviewees 1a, 1b, 5, 7, 8,10) especially on restricting playing time.

Parents from the cross-cultural family group feel their Dutch partners are more relaxed about children's playing of video games. Influenced by the family environment as well as the environment of Dutch society, they have been adjusting their attitudes, parenting and communication strategies. During the interviews, Interviewees 2, 3 and 9 all emphasized that they have become more open, equal and relaxed with their children, and they think this openness and equality is the crucial difference between Dutch and Chinese parents. In the meantime, they retain their "Chinese feature" whether intended or not. All of them admit that they are still more protective and engaged in their children's education. They are stricter than their Dutch partners and always put school performance as top priority. As Interviewee 9 said: "I look into both countries and try to make a balance."

In some cases, the identity of immigrants makes Chinese parents less confident in guiding their children, and this feeling somehow reduces the level of control on children's gaming activities as well as study. For example, Interviewees 1a, 1b and 2 said that they don't control their children too much because they "know nothing".

The emphasis on education is also a feature of Chinese parents. Although many interviewees in the CN group think they are less strict about study than conventional parents in China, they pay great attention to the effect on education - if not limited to

school performance - of playing video games. Some Chinese parents seem more enthusiastic in educational games like *Squla* than Dutch parents. Interviewees 3 and 9 tried to encourage, even "seduce", children to play *Squla*, and the latter has set requirements of scores and time spent playing, making it more of a task than a game. Though other video games are allowed only two days a week, the Interviewee expects her child to spend 30-45 minutes on *Squla* every day with a score no less than 90. Similarly, *Squla* is the only game that Interviewee 3 allows her children to play before going to bed.

This does not mean that study and education are not important for the NL group, who also have high expectations on their children's school performance. However, their attitude seems slightly more relaxed than the Chinese parents. For instance, Interviewee 11 thinks that in spite of the obvious importance of study, it is not the most crucial thing for her children. "The most important thing is that they are happy, for me, that they are healthy, that they can take care of themselves, and that they like their life. It's more important for me than school results." Interviewee 4 also feels that his Chinese wife is stricter on children's study than he is. Interviewee 6 seems to care about his children's academic scores more than the other two, but his requirement, 7 or higher, is actually normal for Chinese parents.

4.4.2 Factors about children

Through the interviews, it can be seen that parents' attitude toward children's video-game-playing is influenced by children's age and gender as well as other factors. One trend is that when children grow older, parents take less control over their gaming activities. For both Chinese and Dutch parents, age 12 is an important milestone, and parents with children aged around 12 have some common opinions. For example, Interviewees 1a and 1b found it more difficult to monitor children's gaming activities when they turned 11 or 12, as the girls got their own smart phones and set private passwords that were not shared with their parents. Interviewee 2 also thinks children younger than 12 years old are more obedient, and those who over 12 are more independent. "Children gradually enter their adolescence since that age, and it can be quite difficult to control them. If you don't do it right, they will rebel, and that's not the result you want to see." Like many other parents, Interviewee 2 set stricter restrictions on game-playing time when her son was little. When he gets older, the rules will become more lenient.

Nikken et al. (2007) argued that parents tend to do more co-playing with daughters than with sons. In this study, only two Chinese parents (Interviewees 3 and 9) and one Dutch parent (Interviewee 4) use co-playing strategy, and both Interviewees 3 and 4 are parents of girls, which fits the argument. It is also evident that while some parents show more trust in girls than boys because they found that girls tend to be less interested in gaming, Chinese parents with daughters reported increasing their level of protection.

Compared with other Chinese parents, those with children who were not born in the Netherlands show more concerns about children's study, especially on Dutch learning, and tend to take these concerns as important reasons for objecting to children's gaming activities. Interviewees 1a, 1b and 7 all agree that their children have to work hard to

catch up with local-born kids and therefore should not “waste time on gaming”.

Although time consumption is parents’ biggest complaint, in this study, the amount as well as the satisfaction of children’s gaming time does not seem closely connected to Chinese parents’ attitude and behavior. For example, both Interviewees 3 and 8 feel their children could have spent less time on video-game-playing, even though according to their opinions expressed during the interviews, they tend to hold a neutral attitude. The most positive parent, Interviewee 9, has time restrictions that are stricter than some other parents. In the NL group, however, parents whose children play for up to 3 hours per day do show a negative attitude.

Children with stronger self-control and better school performance do not necessarily ease their parents’ concerns. Some are more relaxed than others, for example Interviewees 1b and 2 think their children are doing fine so there is no need to be worried or pushy, however Interviewees 1a and 3 would like their children to do better and are still careful to prevent the overuse of gaming.

4.4.3 Factors about games and devices

Features and designs of video games can also influence parents’ attitude. Some Chinese parents think educational games are good tools to help children’s study and therefore encourage children to play. Compared to the Dutch parents, the CN group’s awareness and usage of educational games are slightly lower. However, Chinese parents who have tried to let children to play educational games take a more serious approach to them. Interviewees 3, 8 and 9 are supporters of such games, the most popular educational game they use being *Squla*. As previously mentioned, they encourage children to play *Squla*, and make the exception that for this game children do not have to adhere to time restrictions. Interviewee 9 even makes it as a daily task and sets requirements on score. In comparison, Dutch parents are more casual about children’s playing of educational games.

Although parents are positive about educational games, Interviewees 3 and 9 in the CN group and Interviewee 6 in the NL group mentioned that do not have a naturally sustained interest in education games. According to Interviewee 9, about 80% of her son’s classmates who tried *Squla* quit after a period of playing. Interviewee 6 said: “it’s not a real thing for children, not that exciting […] If you look at the real games, they are much nicer to play with.” Thus, educational games could be improved by being more engaging for children.

Besides educational games, parents’ attitude toward creative and open games is far more positive. All Chinese and Dutch parents who mentioned *Minecraft* approve of it, predominantly because the game lets children creatively build their own world instead of passively following the designed tasks. *Pokémon Go* is also seen as a positive game because it encourages children to go outside rather than sitting indoors and staring at the screen.

On the other hand, Interviewee 5 in the CN group and Interviewees 4, 6 and 11 all mentioned that games are designed to entice the player to continue, which is a feature they are not particularly happy with. Interviewee 4 said: “Those games are built in regular inner forms, that's why, it's a bad thing, actually, because it tends to push you in

a rhythm of playing the game." Interviewees 5 and 6 think the games are designed in a very clever way: by creating a feeling of being "almost there", games make players eager to reach the next level and reluctant to stop.

Parents are more relaxed about smaller non-violent games than bigger online games, and those with violence or other harmful content. In the CN group, parents whose children engage with violent games tend to be more negative. For example, Interviewee 2 whose son plays violent games displayed a negative attitude, while parents whose children do not engage with violent games are less negative. Interviewees 1a, 1b and 3 also describe themselves as negative, but show fewer complaints and concerns than Interviewee 2. Interviewee 8 hold a neutral attitude, and Interviewee 9 is positive. As for Interviewees 5, 7 and 10, they do not support any video games no matter whether the games are violent, so it is not only about content. In fact, none of the Chinese interviewees see harmful content as the main reason to object to children's playing of video games, possibly because the extent of their children's engagement with harmful content is acceptable, and so far no seriously negative effects are apparent.

Device is also a factor relevant to parents' attitude and parenting strategy. Many Chinese parents think it is better for children to play on a mobile device than on a computer. Interviewees 1a and 1b think computer games are more complicated than mobile games and will require more time and effort from children. Interviewee 3 does not encourage children to play on the computer often because she believes it is harder to control, and Interviewee 8 thinks that if children use the computer and go online, she is unable to know what content her children will see and which people they will meet. The NL group seem less concerned about device than the CN group, though Interviewee 4 also limits his daughter's playing on the computers.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

As can be seen from above, Chinese parents living in the Netherlands tend to hold a negative attitude towards children's playing of video games, though most of them also admit that video games may have positive effects. Among the 9 Chinese interviewees, only one claims to have a positive attitude to games, two are neutral, and the rest hold a negative attitude. Although all the parents have made their choices for a variety of reasons, most mentioned both positive and negative aspects of video games and feel think that video games have neither an exclusively good nor exclusively bad influence on children. As for the Dutch group, two out of three parents claim to have a negative attitude, and one chooses a neutral attitude. In comparison, Chinese parents have more concerns about the negative effects of video games, especially on children's study, and tend to be more restrictive.

When explaining the reason for their attitudes, Chinese parents tend to emphasize the effects of games on children's school performance, education and development. Parents who support children's gaming activities think video games can be used as new tools for education and keep children updated to the newest technologies and knowledge, while others think children spend too much time and attention on video games and

cannot concentrate on study. To some extent, Dutch parents are more relaxed than Chinese parents regarding school performance. Although they also care about children's education, grades are not the only or most important thing to be considered.

Apart from the effects on education, Chinese parents demonstrate significant concerns about the possible harm to children's vision and think video games are a threat due to the prolonged screen time. This could be due to the fact that a large proportion of Chinese children have vision problems. Figures from Chinese government websites show that in 2014, 45% of the students in primary schools had eyesight problems, with percentages in secondary and high school of 74.3% and 83.3%. Although video games are not the only cause of vision problems, it is reasonable that Chinese parents are more sensitive and concerned about such an issue. As a comparison, Dutch parents show much lower concern about this factor, possibly because children's vision is not such a severe issue in the Netherlands.

Some parents also mentioned that playing video games occupies too much time, and as a result children's outdoor activities and face-to-face interactions are lacking. Moreover, some are worried about addiction and online safety. These concerns are shared by both Chinese and Dutch parents but are not seen as very serious threats, possibly because their children are under control and are on the "safe side".

As for parental mediation, most of the interviewees have struggles about protecting and guiding children's gaming activities. Some mentioned that nowadays media are more private and can support multitasking, therefore it is hard to know what children are doing behind the screen even when in the same room as them. Restrictive mediation is still the most widely used strategy for both Chinese and Dutch parents, and the restrictions include gaming time, device, content, place and behavior. Active mediation is used more by Dutch parents than Chinese parents, and co-playing and participatory learning is rarer especially for Chinese parents. Parents with a more positive or neutral attitude towards video games are more willing to play together with their children. However, according to some Chinese interviewees, this is due to their own interest or a desire to build a closer parent-children bond, rather than to protect or guide children. That means the awareness and knowledge of co-playing and participatory learning are still limited among both Chinese and Dutch parents.

Some parents have special restrictions for children's playing of online games because of the internet safety issues. For example, some interviewees simply forbid children to play games online, and some warn children not to share personal information on the internet. Technical restriction is used more by Dutch parents than Chinese parents. Many Chinese interviewees said that they did not realize that there are software or tools that can protect children's online activities. In China these tools are not popular, so it is no surprise to see that many Chinese parents are not aware of this strategy.

The communication styles used by Chinese parents and Dutch parents vary. Most of the Chinese interviewees feel they are influenced by both Chinese and Dutch culture, and that their way of communicating with children is more relaxed than parents in China but stricter than local Dutch parents. In comparison with Chinese parents who are used to controlling or managing children's behavior, Dutch parents are more willing to have equal discussions with their children and set rules together. It is also interesting

to see that Chinese parents with Dutch partners looks more relaxed than those who have Chinese partners, which may indicate the deeper impact from Dutch culture.

Referring to the awareness and use of PEGI, it is reasonable that Dutch parents' performance is better than Chinese parents. Since China has not introduced any rating system for television, film and video games, it is not natural for Chinese parents to be aware of PEGI and to use it. Some interviewees even have misunderstandings and think that PEGI shows the complexity of games, which is not PEGI's focus. Parents with a higher level of integration, especially those who have Dutch partners, show better knowledge about PEGI, while the education level does not show much influence. In general, Chinese parents' understanding of PEGI still needs to be improved.

From the result of interviews, it can be found that parents of girls are slightly more protective than parents of boys, although the differences are not very significant. Children's age can also be a factor that influence parental attitudes. The interviews show that when children become teenagers, parents' protection and restrictions tend to loosen. Some parents said that children of that age are harder to guide or control and should be given more freedom and respect. If their children were not born in the Netherlands, parents are more likely to feel anxious about children's education, especially Dutch lessons, and feel that their children need to spend more time and effort to compete with native Dutch speaking students. However, even if the children have a good school performance and self-control, this does not prevent their parents from worrying. Parents' level of anxiety and attitude towards video games more dependent on their expectations of children and their ideas about education and parenting.

Additionally, there is no significant difference between higher-educated parents and lower-educated parents. On the contrary, parents with more experience and understandings of video games are more positive than those who do not know much about gaming. Parents living in the Netherlands for a longer time and have a higher level of integration also show a more positive attitude towards video games.

Besides the general attitude towards video games, some types of games are more acceptable for parents than others. Educational games are the most welcome type of games among Chinese parents because they are thought to help children's study and improve their knowledge. In general, Chinese parents' awareness of educational games is still low, even though those who let their children play educational games take it more seriously than Dutch parents. Some set strict goals and make educational game playing a chore rather than entertainment. Creative and open games also get more positive feedback compared to other types of games, because parents think these games make children more creative. The so called "small games" cause fewer concerns among both Chinese and Dutch parents, as the content is usually more entertaining and relaxing without harmful elements such as violence. Parents' attitudes toward mobile games are more relaxed than PC or online games.

Above are the main conclusions of this research. It is evident that in general Chinese parents living in the Netherlands have a more negative attitude towards video games than Dutch parents do, although most of them think there are also positive aspects. Most Chinese parents feel that they are stricter than Dutch parents, but more lenient than traditional Chinese parents, which could be the result of a combination of Chinese and

Dutch culture. The effects of video games on study and eye sight are two mostly frequently mentioned reasons. The level of integration, children's age, type of games and device have more significant association with parents' attitude.

This research focused on Chinese parents living in the Netherlands and explored their attitude towards children's use of video games. Since there are few existing studies on this subject, this thesis would like to provide some insight into this population group and the relationship between parent, child and video games. Due to the limited number of subjects for interview, the results only show some possible directions and are not representative. If opportunity allows, more interviews and surveys can be conducted to provide a more generalized and valid representation of parental attitudes towards children's use of video games.

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Website

ISFE: http://www.isfe.eu/
PEGI: http://www.pegi.info/nl/index/
China Game Publishers Association (in Chinese):
http://www.chinaexhibition.com/Official_Site/21-323-China_Game_Publishers_Association.html

Appendix: Coding Tree

attitude

————parents' attitude in general
————————————————positive
————————————————neutral
————————————————negative
————————————————media reports in China
————————————————influenced by their parents/family

————parents' understanding of games
————————————————popular among children
————————————————don't know much about game
————————————————different types of game
————————————————game is developing and changing

————parents' gaming experience
————————————————parents' playing time
————————————————parents' devices
————————————————games parents play
————————————————parents' feeling

————children's gaming experience
————————————————children's playing time
————————————————children's devices
————————————————games children play
————————————————children's attitude

————study
————————————————expectation
————————————————importance of study

————————————————differences China and the Netherlands
————————————————relationship between study and gaming
————————————————study time
————————————————study in digital times

————educational games
————————————————interesting
————————————————help children to study
————————————————encourage or push children to play
————————————————children lost their interest
————————————————not real games

effects of game

————benefits
————————————————relaxation and entertainment
————————————————eye-hand coordination
————————————————benefits intellectual development
————————————————learn skills and knowledge
————————————————creativity
————————————————logical thinking
————————————————strategy and problem solving
————————————————experience new technology
————————————————learn to manage time
————————————————mood
————————————————beautiful game design
————————————————interaction with other gamers
————————————————play together with friends
————————————————learn to behave and make compromises

————harms and risks
————————————————a waste of time
————————————————not a real rest
————————————————interfere study
————————————————eyesight
————————————————addiction
————————————————online security
————————————————violence and aggression
————————————————sex
————————————————affect intellectual development
————————————————less face-to-face communication
————————————————less family time
————————————————less outdoor activities

————————————————————horror content
————————————————————gambling
————————————————————drugs
————————————————————mental development
————————————————————conflicts
————————————————————sleeping quality
————————————————————limits children’s imagination

parental mediation

————restrictions and rules
————————————————————gaming time
————————————————————type
————————————————————content
————————————————————device
————————————————————place
————————————————————bedtime
————————————————————download
————————————————————purchase
————————————————————safety

————active mediation
————————————————————parents’ presence
————————————————————discuss and explain

————co-playing
————————————————————play together with children
————————————————————children’s invitation
————————————————————parent-child relationship
————————————————————play for fun
————————————————————help children to play

————online gaming
————————————————————internet safety
————————————————————internet use
————————————————————technical tools
————————————————————monitoring

————other places to play
————————————————————at other people’s home
————————————————————at school
————————————————————afterschool care

————the way of parenting and communication
————————————————parents' authority
————————————————children's private
————————————————freedom
————————————————rebelling
————————————————make rule together
————————————————lost temper
————————————————how strict
————————————————protect and guidance
————————————————parents' cooperation with each other
————————————————distract children from gaming

————consulting and discussion
————————————————with other parents
————————————————with teachers or experts
————————————————information on the internet

————difficulties and concerns
————————————————hard to monitor
————————————————hard to find the balance
————————————————hard to stick to the rules
————————————————hard to stop children form gaming
————————————————use games to make children occupied
————————————————self-doubts in parenting

————factors that influence the way of parenting
————————————————Chinese culture and society
————————————————Dutch culture and society
————————————————children's age
————————————————children's gender
————————————————self-discipline

PEGI
————awareness of PEGI in general
————————————————awareness of rating systems in general
————————————————aware of PEGI for movies/TV

————awareness of PEGI for game
————————————————recognize PEGI game labels
————————————————never heard about PEGI
————————————————understand the meaning of PEGI labels
————————————————misunderstanding
————————————————see PEGI labels without intention
————————————————know PEGI since a child

——————the use of PEGI
————————————————————use PEGI for movies
————————————————————use PEGI for games

——————the use of PEGI's website
————————————————————don't know the website
————————————————————know the website but never use
————————————————————check the website for information

——————when to be flexible
————————————————————children's age
————————————————————children's mental age
————————————————————children's peers
————————————————————children's demands
————————————————————what kind of game

——————attitude towards PEGI
————————————————————a useful reference
————————————————————don't pay attention particularly
————————————————————not necessary
————————————————————doubts or disagreements