

Video game controllers affect hostility during game play

January 25 2013

When selecting a video game to play, opting to turn on your Wii may provide a different experience than playing your Xbox, according to a study from Mississippi State University.

The study, set to be published in the January 2013 issue of *Mass Communication and Society*, found that individuals playing with the [Wii remote](#) and [Wii nunchuck](#) (also known as naturally-mapped controllers), were more likely to feel hostile after playing a video game than those that used a more traditional controller. The additional feeling of immersion in the game, it seems, increased the potential for aggressive response following the play of a [violent game](#), which in this research was Punchout.

"My research also says that while [motion controls](#) can enhance your connection to the game, we aren't necessarily to the point where home gaming technology makes the player feel immersed and surrounded by the game," Dr. Kevin D. Williams, the study's author said. "That feeling is still very much a subjective human-driven process rather than an objective technology driven process."

Over 70 males participated in the study which had them play the same video game; the difference was that about half of the participants were assigned to each of the two types of [video game controllers](#). The research also found that those using the naturally-mapped controllers were more likely to identify with the video game character, and they had higher levels of self-presence. Self-presence is the ability to actually feel

like you are moving with the character.

"What needs to be clearly stated is that motion controls did increase hostility in the players, but only in a small amount (after a single 10-minute exposure to the game). My study doesn't look at long term implications either, so that small increase in hostility could be short lived," Williams said. "My concern as a parent would be where the industry is heading. If these controls impact hostility, even in a small sense now, what safeguards or ethical policies will the industry enact to make sure that as technology advances smaller impressionable children are protected."

The article entitled, "The Effects of Video Game Controls on [Hostility](#), Identification, and Presence," was researched and written by Williams, an Associate Professor of communication at Mississippi State University.

More information: "The Effects of Video Game Controls on Hostility, Identification, and Presence" is available at:
[www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/1 ... 15205436.2012.661113](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/1...15205436.2012.661113)

Provided by Taylor & Francis

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