

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

The important or famous people like a president or a prime minister, or even normal people usually say that “Children are the future of the nation; therefore, the prosperity and stability of a country depends on the children.” In addition, from a talk given by H.H. Swami Chinmayananda on Nov. 1, 1987 at the Jamnabai Narsee School as a part of the Narsee Monjee Birth Centenary Celebrations, “ So one little child can change the entire history of the country. That is how all the great men of the past were made-a Shivaji, an Einstein, a Tagore, a Mahatama Gandhi.” (<http://www.chinmaya-chicago.com/children.htm>). This means that children are so influential that they can direct the future of the nation. Thus, knowing the activities, interests or lifestyles of children are necessary. According to a Bangkok poll in 2003, the majority of Thai children played online games. 37.7% of students who were above 10 years old played online games three or four days a week, 25.8% of them played online games five or six days a week and 18.5% played them every day. Moreover, 54.1% of students played online games 1-3 hour/hours, 31.4% played 4-6 hours, 6.5% played 7-10 hours, and 3.3% played 10 hours. Furthermore, from the research of Dr. Napadol Kanika, and colleagues in 2005, the number of the students who was above 12 years old who enjoyed playing online games were about 1,500,000. The students who were 7 – 25 years old played online games 4.5 hours per day, and 32% of them played those games more than 5 hours. The popularity of online game websites increased dramatically from 10,000,000 to 75,500,000 in 2005. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Rajanagarindra Institute poll showed that more than 200,000 children registered to play online games 15-24 hours per week. Players had to pay 50-300 baht to play games during the summer.(Dailynews, 2006). Moreover, according to an Abac poll in 2008, 24% of 1,141 student who were 10-24 years old played online games almost every day or every day. The duration of playing time was 3 hours 1 minute and the average cost was 537 baht. Half of them said that it was very easy to play

online games because there were more than 10 online game shops near their schools or houses (Dailynews, 2006).

Excessive game playing seems to be a big problem for Thai children; however, this issue has not attracted as much attention as other problems. Nevertheless, there was some news that grabbed the attention of the public. In 2007, a 20 year old man went to the police station to take his motorbike back. However, the policemen suspected that he had a gun in his jacket, and then they tried to search him. Unfortunately, he made a stab at the policeman with a knife, and then shot some policemen and bystanders. Finally, he was killed by the police. Based on the investigation, the police found that he always played online games especially Counter Strike; a game where policemen and thieves fight one another by shooting. The most important finding was that his gun was the same as the thieves' gun in that game (Khaosod, August 10, 2008) In addition, on August 3, 2008, a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student killed a taxi driver. He wanted to rob the driver, but the driver tried to fight. Finally, he killed the driver. He confessed that he liked playing Grand Theft Auto Game (GTA); where the main player is a thief who collects points by chasing and killing others. After playing it, he thought that killing people was easy. As a result, he tried to challenge himself by killing the others (<http://tnews.teenee.com/crime/25677.html>).

Furthermore, there were other surprising issues that have shocked people. According to the Department of Public Health, the number of children with psychological problems increased dramatically from 6,148 to 8,967 in 2006 and they often used the call center of the Department of Public Health. The main were psychological and behavioral problems, including game addiction, that led to imitation of violence (<http://www.sudipan.net/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=17592>).

Thus, it is interesting to study the opinions about violent online games. Moreover, according to a talk given by H.H. Swami Chinmayananda, "...training of our children can only be done between the ages of 6 to 12, between ages 12 to 18 also can be done to an extent,....we should concern children from ages of 6-18." ( <http://www.chinmaya-chicago.com/children.htm>). Accordingly, a study of elementary pupils and high-school students is very useful.

## 1.2 STATEMENTS OF THE PROBLEM

There is one main statement of the problem and two sub-statements in this research.

### **Main Problem:**

How do elementary pupils and high-school students in Bangkok rate violent online games?

### **Sub Problems:**

1. What is the online game playing behavior of elementary pupils in Bangkok?
2. What is the online game playing behavior of high-school students in Bangkok?

## 1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

### **Main Objective:**

To find out the levels of ratings on opinions about violent online games for both elementary pupils and high-school students in Bangkok.

### **Sub Objectives:**

1. To explore the online game playing behavior of elementary pupils in Bangkok.
2. To explore the online game playing behavior of high- school students in Bangkok.

## 1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Definitions of the terms mentioned in this study are the following:

1. School Year Level: Both elementary pupils and high-school students enjoy playing online games. Therefore, the school year level refers to the level of education, as this can affect maturity. The school year level is divided into two parts:
  - Elementary Pupils: Students who study in Prathom 4 to Prathom 6 in Bangkok.

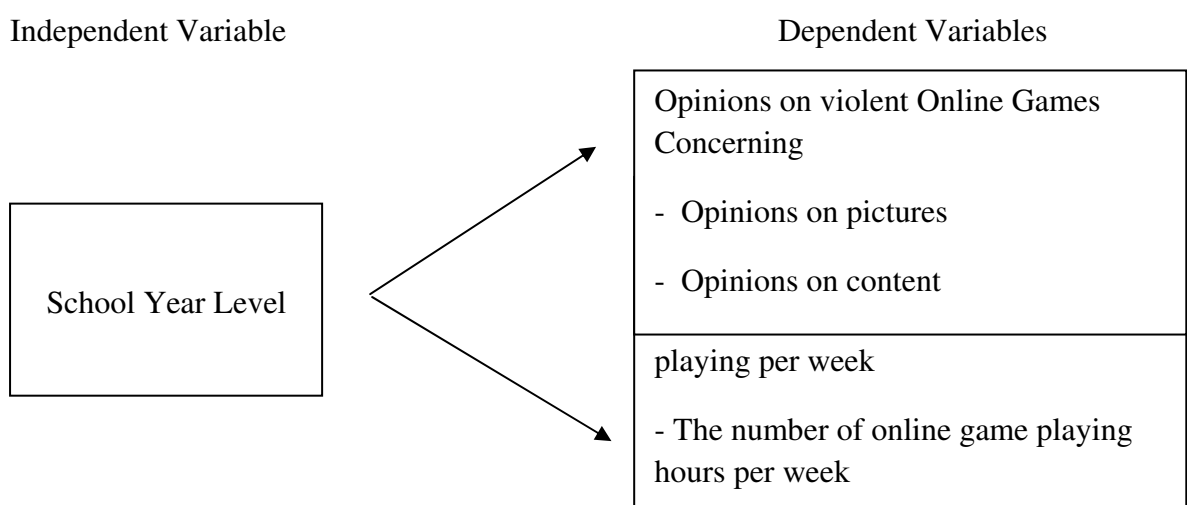
- High-School Students: Students who study in Mathayom 4 to Mathayom 6 in Bangkok.

2. Violent Online Games: According to the Entertainment Software Rating Board(ESRB)'s rating, (the rating system used to help consumers and parents evaluate which games are age and content appropriate for them and their families) violent online games are divided into two types: violent and intense violent. Violent games consist of scenes involving aggressive conflict. These may contain bloodless dismemberment. Intense violent games contain graphic and realistic-looking depictions of physical conflict. These may involve extreme and/or realistic blood, gore, weapons and depictions of human injury and death ([http://www.esrb.org/ratings/ratings\\_guide.jsp](http://www.esrb.org/ratings/ratings_guide.jsp)).

3. Level of Rating on Opinions about Violent Online Games: The respondents were asked their opinions on the degree of violence in terms of pictures or content in each online game. There were four levels for the ratings: Not Violent, Slightly Violent, Very Violent, and Extremely Violent.

4. Online Game Playing Behaviors: The frequency of online game playing time and the number of hours per week that elementary pupils and high-school students played popular online games.

***Figure 1: Conceptual framework of elementary pupils and high school students' opinions on violent online games and their online game playing behavior.***



## **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study focuses on the levels of ratings of opinions about violent online games for both elementary pupils and high-school students in Bangkok. Since Prathom 1-3 students were too young to understand and analyze the questionnaires, the elementary pupils chosen for this study were Prathom 4-6 students. The questionnaires were given to only 180 respondents, as it was too difficult to give the questionnaires to Bangkok students in all districts. As a result, the questionnaires were allocated not only to internet shops, but also to elementary schools and high school in Bangsue district.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The results of the survey will be useful in helping owners of online game shops choose suitable online games. Moreover, both parents and teachers will know whether popular online games are dangerous for the children. The finding can also be used as information or guidelines for related further study.

## **1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The study of The Level of Rating opinions on Violent Online Games for both Elementary Pupils and High-School Students in Bangkok is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1: The Introduction which presents the background, statement of the problem, objective of the study, definition of terms, scope and significance of the study.

Chapter 2: Review of related theories, concepts, and literature.

Chapter 3: The methods used in data collection, procedures, and the data analysis method.

Chapter 4: The analysis of the data from the questionnaires and the results of the findings.

Chapter 5: The summary of the study, as well as the discussion, conclusion and recommendations for further research.