

Career Paths of Women in the German Games Industry

Sonja Ganguin

University of Leipzig/ Institute for Communications and Media Sciences
sonja.ganguin@uni-leipzig.de

Anna Hoblitz

University of Paderborn/ Institute for Media Studies
anho@mail.upb.de

Abstract

In this paper, we investigate the career paths of women in the German games industry. On the basis of interviews with women who work in different segments of the games business – thus representing an expert view on the sector – we gained a diverse and profound insight into the careers of women in the games industry. A main focus was on the question of what challenges women in a male-dominated work environment meet. The results of this qualitative study show that the career paths of the women are highly individual and that the majority of them accidentally found their way into this business. However, they love their work and they confidently face such challenges as being a woman in a male domain or the long-hours culture.

Author Keywords

Women in games; Games industry; gender; career paths

Introduction

When it comes to the use of computer and video games, the discussion rather typically turns to gender differences. However, today, the typical gamer is not male. In Germany, for example, 10.8 million women play regularly, comprising 44 percent of all German gamers (see BIU, 2013a). Similar results were obtained by the Entertainment Software Association (see ESA, 2013): According to their study, 45 percent of American players are female. Still, playing habits differ between women and men. In general, women tend not to be core-gamers – they prefer casual games like motion-, music-, or social-network-games (see BIU, 2013a). Some companies have realized that there is such a tendency and want to employ more qualified female specialists. For instance, the PlayStation 4 should be interesting especially for women; therefore, Sony is looking for female developers (Weber, 2013). Nonetheless, today's video games industry is still a male-dominated field: "Evidence for games' masculinized culture stretches across both production and consumption" (Jenson, Fisher & de Castell, 2011, p.149).

Why relatively few women are working in this creative and challenging area is not entirely clear. Possible reasons, which are often highlighted in this context, are the long and not very flexible

working hours, the difficulty of reconciling work and family life, and women's supposedly limited interest in the so-called STEM fields, especially computer science. At the same time there already are some successful women in the games industry – as producers, developers, publishers, etc. However, little is known about their biographies, careers, their points of view and attitudes. What was their specific way into the industry? How would they describe their own role in the business? Are they confronted with gender differences in their daily work and what are their strategies to deal with problems related to these differences? To answer these questions we developed a qualitative study, which focuses on the perspective of women working in the game industry by interviewing them as experts.

The German Games Industry

Digital games are not just a cultural phenomenon but also an economic factor. There are nearly 26 million gamers in Germany – children, adolescents and adults (BIU, 2013a). Today, the German government tries to create a higher acceptance of the cultural phenomenon of gaming and to strengthen the production of digital games in Germany. One effective marketing-instrument is the German Videogames Award, which is awarded annually to honor remarkable German game productions. The market volume of the national games industry in 2012 was about 1.5 billion euro. Furthermore, in the same period, 73.7 million games were sold. Compared to 2011 this is a growth rate of four percent (BIU, 2013b). This indicates that the gaming industry is an essential part of the overall German media sector (Müller-Lietzkow, Bouncken Seufert & 2006, p. 25f.) and further growth could be anticipated.

About 300 companies and 10,500 people work in and around video games production (cf. BIU, 2013c). According to estimates, only five to six percent of these employees are women (Hoppenstedt, 2012). Even compared to the overall cross-industry average of women in higher management positions, which is eleven percent, the games industry employs remarkably few women. This outstanding gender-related phenomenon is typical not just of the German video games industry, but of the games industry world-wide (Bryce & Rutter, 2002; Prescott & Bogg, 2011a/b; Dyer-Witthford & Sharman, 2005). For instance, in 2009, only four percent of British employees in the games sector were women. Compared with 2006, this is a decrease of six percentage points, evidence that the gap between the numbers of women and men working in the field is actually increasing (Skillset, 2006; 2009).

Several political and industry-driven projects have been set up over the last few years to change this situation. For instance, the initiative Women in Games Jobs (WIGJ) supports women by providing a social network for the exchange of experience. And in Germany, the BIU organizes several meetings and events with game companies especially for girls. Obviously, there is political interest in raising the proportion of women in this male-dominated field. This development entails a chance for women who want to work in the video games sector.

Methods and Participants

The main idea behind this project is to talk to some of the few women who found their way into the digital games industry and to identify specific starting points and milestones of their careers.

Thus we focused on the following research questions: What are the various career paths of women working in the games industry? How do women describe the games sector and their role in it?

To answer these questions, we chose the method of conducting guided expert interviews. Expert interviews are a common method in empirical social research. Beyond research in policy and the sociology of work and labor markets, expert interviews are applied in the field of women's and gender studies, in studies on the development and implementation of gender political measures and programs as well as in research on the relations of organization and gender (Meuser & Nagel, 2010, p. 377). Typically such expert interviews are based on previously designed guided interview questions which address both general and individual aspects. For this study individual questions addressed the respective interviewees' position in the company. In this case, the main benefit of expert interviews is, first, the type of knowledge acquisition: the experts can express their contextual knowledge. Second, the informants' expertise is explicitly addressed through questions designed specifically to reveal their professional knowledge.

The survey period was November 2012 to March 2013. The participating students also conducted the interviews. The idea behind this arrangement was to offer the students the possibility to connect with potential role models. With these interviews, the women's biographical status as well as key factors in their careers could be determined. The interview questions were therefore not given to the experts before the interview, because we were interested especially in their spontaneous answers. The length of the interviews varied between 45 and 60 minutes.

Regarding the recruitment of experts, there is often criticism that the selection of the interviewees does not follow clearly defined selection criteria (Meuser & Nagel, 1997, p. 483). In the present study an expert is defined as a person who is especially competent with regard to the issue of interest (Deeke, 1995, p. 7f.). This means that the expert has an advantage in knowledge over the researcher. Because of the focus on women in games, the experts are women who have valuable insights in the education and career paths as well as "special knowledge about social issues" (Gläser & Laudel, 2004, p. 10; translated) in the video game industry.

The sample of experts was selected on the basis of two main criteria: First, different fields of the gaming industry are included – such as publishing, development, human resources, and public relations; Second, the sample represents various career steps, which means we interviewed women at the beginning of their careers as well as those in executive positions. Initially, women we were already acquainted with were interviewed and asked for further information about other important women in the games industry. Then, a kind of 'snowball effect' as well as a search on internet platforms like Xing was used to enlarge the sample size. Nearly every women we asked to participate took part in the project. Altogether, 15 guided expert interviews were conducted (see Table 1). The age of the informants varies between 28 and 49. The sample fits the two selection criteria; as a result, there is heterogeneity of experts' positions: a consultant, a game designer, a business analyst, a head of user experience, and a head of human resources; and two women in public relations (one working for a publisher and the other for a developer). Five women occupy managerial positions (senior manager, executive manager or managing director).

Finally, two experts work for institutions related to the gaming sector, and one is chief editor for a game magazine. Among the companies represented by these experts are Nintendo, Blue Byte/Ubisoft, Electronic Arts, Crytek, Travian Games, Innogames, Bigpoint, and Wooga; all major game companies in Germany have been taken into account. To preserve the anonymity of the participants, pseudonyms are used in this paper.

Anonymized Name	Age	In Business since	Position	Size of Company
Juno	49	2010	Head of Human Resources	250+
Carla	28	2010	Head of User Experience	No Details
Carmen	No Details	2013	Game Tester	about. 12
Maria	32	2010	Business Analyst	250
Trinity	No Details	1993	Editor in Chief of a Games Magazine	No Details
Faith	49	1997	Managing Director	No Details
Zelda	38	2008	PR-Managerin	5.195
Lucy	37	2003	Senior Business Manager (Mobile)	9.000
Madison	38	2006	Product Director	150
Giana	34	2003	Game Designer	250
Paine	No Details	2009	Senior PR-Manager	800+
Elaine	No Details	1999	Consultant for a Computer Game Association	No Details
Lara	No Details	1995	Managing Director	350+
Eleanor	44	ca. 2005	Managing Director	No Details
Peach	33	2007	Senior Consultant	No Details

Table 1: Overview of the 15 guided expert interviews

Results

To answer our research questions we focused on five key subjects for the analysis of the interviews. These key subjects are: perceptions of the games industry, the career paths of the experts, work-life-balance, potential barriers for women, and finally, potential advantages of a job in the games industry.

The German Games Industry: Young, Dynamic and Male-Dominated

According to our experts the gaming industry is a particularly young sector. Informants used the attribute “*young*” in two ways: with reference both to the age of the medium and to the age of the people working in this field. The first steps of the video games industry were taken approximately 40 years ago and in this short period it developed into an emergent and important market (Donovan, 2010). Our informants point out that they often work with young people, because they give “*a lot of input,*” said Eleanor, who has been working in the games industry for almost 10 years and now has a leading position in management. This characterization of a young industry evokes further associations. For instance, Lucy (a Senior Business Manager in the field of mobile games who has worked in the industry since 2003) points out: “*I like that the industry is very young, very colloquial, very ordinary. I don’t have to wear a suit and I communicate with*

my colleagues on a first name basis.” This is very uncommon in other industries in Germany. By using first names, the verbal distance between colleagues and the boss is reduced and hierarchical company structures are less obvious. Whether the company structures in the games industry are indeed less hierarchical and are, instead, horizontal and more flexible cannot be inferred from the informality of communicative norms alone. However, the work climate does appear to be less formal, as demonstrated by the casual dress code that Lucy emphasizes. Similarly, Maria, a young business analyst, who began her career in the industry in 2010, characterizes this rather informal workplace culture as “*relatively young,*” “*casual,*” and “*relaxed.*” Informants speak of the more casual working climate and the dress code as positive features. Zelda, PR-manager in a global company since 2008, points out that it is a “*great, young industry, which is very passionate.*” The characterization of the games sector as “*passionate*” is interconnected with the image of the products as well as with the typical feeling of gaming, where games and gaming are seen as a very passionate hobby. From a psychological point of view, games are seen to have a passionate aspect; playing is characterized as “*autotelic*” (cf. Huizinga, 1955, p. 8). Zelda attributes a strong emotional component to the games industry, which evokes semantic associations of an inspiring and flexible professional field. As a consequence, our study informants depict the games industry as “*dynamic*”, evidenced by the fact that “*it continues to develop and to bring forth ever new innovations*” (Elaine, advisor and consultant for a German computer game association), and that “*a lot of things can change very fast*” (Maria, a 32-year-old business analyst for German online games provider). As one aspect of that dynamic, innovation and development in games and related technologies are seen as positive features. However, negative features of this dynamic are seen in the labor turnover rate by senior consultant Peach: She mentions a certain “*Hire-and-Fire mentality.*” Perhaps it is a testament to the truth of that observation that in the course of this study three of its expert informants changed their jobs since we conducted their interviews.

As noted, besides the age of the medium and the industry itself, the people working in this field are young, too. Compared to the cross-industry average, the age structure in the games sector is – according to the Hoppenstedter (2012) industry monitor – very young. Looking at the Management organizational level, 35 percent of the managers in the games industry are between 31 and 40 years old, whereas in other industries just 13 percent belong to this age group (Hoppenstedt, 2012). As an interim summary, according to our informants, the German games industry is young, passionate, dynamic, casual, and relaxed.

In addition to its characterization as a young industry, the other obvious feature is that, compared with other sectors, the games industry is a heavily male-dominated field (Hoppenstedt, 2012). In general, organizations, organizational segments, hierarchical structures and trades are considered male-dominated if they exhibit a quantitative predominance of male employees (Rastetter, 1998, p. 169). For Kanter (1997), up to 15 percent of female employees constitutes a sensible reference point for the characterization of a ‘male domain.’ Yet all our informants agree in their perception of the games industry as a male-dominated field:

- “It is still the case that in our industry most of the employees are men.” (Paine, senior PR-manager)
- “It is a fact that the gaming industry is male-dominated.” (Eleanor, managing director)
- “It is... yes, it is a male domain.” (Lara, managing director)

- "I think it is still the fact that many more men than women work in this field." (Madison, product director)

There are two dimensions where the gender gap becomes highly obvious: the position in the company and the specific field of work. Regarding position in the company, the Hoppenstedter branch monitor concludes that few women work in the highest management level: "The top management is young, but most of all male" (Hoppenstedt 2012). This is often the perception of the experts, too: "*There are almost no women in managing or executive positions*" (Peach, 33-year-old senior consultant). In this context critics discuss what is called the "glass ceiling effect" (Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia & Vanneman, 2001), a notion that is also used in games research (Krotoski, 2004; Dyer-Witthford & Sharman, 2005). The metaphor of the glass ceiling highlights that women in companies and organizations do not advance to top-management positions. Instead, their careers end in middle management due to barriers that are regarded as invisible, because they are difficult to uncover and be "*made visible*," as Carmen (a young game tester for the age rating of digital games in Germany) reminds in her interview. Even though Prescott & Bogg (2011a) could not find a direct indicator for the "glass ceiling effect" in their quantitative studies, since there are women working as senior executives, it is striking that the interviewed women themselves have a different perception, and they agreed that it is more difficult for qualified women to attain top management positions (Prescott & Bogg, 2011a, p. 17f.). Peach, a 33-year-old senior consultant who no longer works in the games industry, reports from her experiences as a business consultant that "*certain positions are rather filled by men.*" Also Zelda (PR-manager in a global company since 2008) contends that "*if men are too dominant, women may be disadvantaged*," yet she claims to have not experienced this yet.

Looking at the specific field of work, the games industry offers diverse and varied jobs, including programming, design, marketing, sales, and public relations. Comparing the percentage of women working in the games industry, a second gender gap becomes visible: Women mostly work in areas which are not directly concerned with producing games; they work, for example, in human resources or marketing. Madison, product director for a browser and online games provider, calls these *fields* "*classical female sections.*" Explanations for why women and men choose different professions draw on gender stereotypes of occupations. Certain fields are seen as "typically male" (e.g. construction work) or "typically female" (e.g. nursing). According to Heintz and Nadai (1998 p. 80), the gendered division of the labor market into male and female occupations is an exceptionally stable characteristic of industrialized countries. More specifically, a gift for mathematics or technical skills are generally perceived as male (Cockburn, 1985). To that effect, "*the confidence in women's technical knowledge is low*," game tester Carmen maintains. She is of the opinion that the computer and video games industry does not necessarily need to be a male domain, for there is "*nothing inherent in one's sex that predisposes one toward an interest in games and technology*" but that the persisting conditions of gender-specific socialization continue to lead to such gender differences "*that we all are subject to.*" It is thus no surprise that for this study just one female game designer could be interviewed. "*Especially in game development we no doubt still have a surplus of men*," Giana, a 34-year-old game designer, criticizes. This is not a specifically German phenomenon. The low percentage of women working in the development of games is confirmed by international studies. For example, Jenson, Fisher and de Castell (2011) point out that "the video game market is one of the largest entertainment markets, grossing \$10.5 billion in 2009, but women make up approximately 12%

of the game design and development workforce, with the largest number not actually designing, but involved in human resources and management” (p. 149). In this vein, Prescott and Bogg (2013b, p. 55) also report that in the development of games, women are underrepresented.

However, according to our informants there is an increasing demand for female workers in the games development sector: *“In Germany, there is an enormous demand for female designers and developers”* (Elaine, advisor and consultant for a German computer game association). Study informants say they would like to have more women on their teams arguing that more women in the games industry would mean a better working atmosphere raising the quality of products. Elaine argues that the present circumstances *“are certainly not satisfying, and I believe that there is a lot of additional scope for more female employees.”* However, *“especially in game development, we have hardly any female applicants”* (Lara, managing director of a game developer). And there are fewer female than male students, as Paine (senior PR-manager of an international German game developer) comments speaking of her experience as a lecturer at a private university. Even so, there are some positive trends towards an increasing number of women, for example, one informant reports that *“Six years ago there were not as many women at business events as there are now”* (Madison, product director at a browser and online games provider since 2006).

In Germany, there is currently a discussion about the value of setting a quota for women on supervisory boards – this could be one way to get more women working in the games industry. Asked about this discussion and if it may help to have more women in leadership positions, our informants only partially argue in favor of a quota. Instead, they stress the qualification of all workers: *“Nevertheless, it is important to choose a woman because she is the best person for this job and not just because she is a woman”* (Faith, senior business manager for the mobile section of an international renowned publisher). Lucy (Senior Business Manager in the field of mobile games and working in the industry since 2003) adds that a quota could detract from a focus that should be on hiring based on expertise. A final look at the industry-specific characterization of the video games sector by our informants leads to the following conclusion:

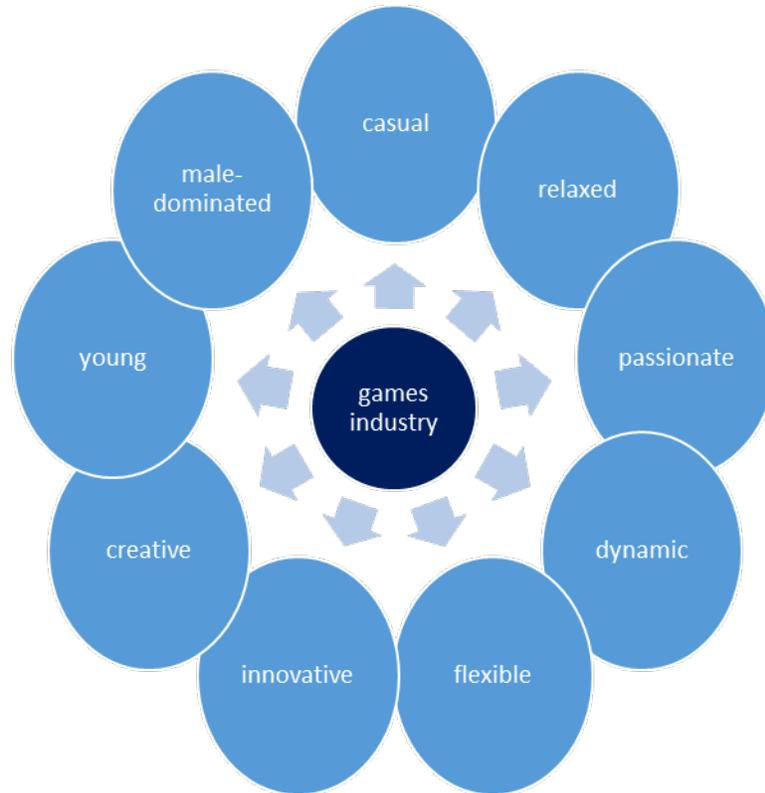


Figure 1: Characterization of the German games industry

As figure 1 shows, informants characterize the gaming industry on a social level – especially with respect to the working atmosphere and the dress code – as “*casual*” and “*relaxed*.” On an emotional level, they describe the industry as “*passionate*.” On a procedural level, the games sector appears to them to be “*dynamic*” and “*flexible*,” with the aim to be “*creative*” and “*innovative*.” And regarding the socio-demographic state of the branch, we see a “*young*,” and “*male-dominated*” field.

Career Paths

All of the experts chose to work in this male-dominated field. Some of them started their work in the games industry just a few years ago; others have been in the business for 15 years or longer. Thus, it is instructive to analyze the different career paths of these women. All of the interviewed experts studied at a university, but only one studied computer science (with a focus on media). One reason for this might be the fact that until recently in Germany, there was no special course of studies for game design or programming, or any course of studies otherwise explicitly related to the games industry.

Nearly all our informants have done internships but only one completed an internship in a games company. A good education, which does not have to be in the field of gaming, seems to be important. Five of the 15 women found their first job directly in the games sector. The rest are lateral recruits and have had totally different jobs, for example as lawyers or teachers. Furthermore, seven of them have changed their jobs in this sector. It seems that the games sector

can be characterized by extremely high turnover rates, which may explain why one informant talks a lot about “*a hire and fire mentality*” (Peach, see also page 5 in this paper).

Informants’ motivations to find a job in the game industry were very different. Mostly, for our interviewees, it was not because of any fascination with gaming and not because of a specific educational program that they found their way into the sector; rather it was a result of personal contact with people working in this field, or with mentors (professors, teaching assistants, CEOs, which in our study were, interestingly enough, all male). A survey by Dietz, Röttger and Szameitat (2011) has shown that good connections offer an important advantage to attaining jobs in the sector. About a quarter of all recruitments in 2010 took place because of good contacts. Even human resource departments nowadays use personal networks to find qualified staff. In two of three cases, the search for staff based on personal contact was successful (Allmendinger, Gieseck & Heisig, 2009, p. 44). According to the authors, friends and acquaintances are the most important sources of information to get a job in general. About 40 percent of workers have found their job through social contacts like these. Especially in rather small industries and companies, good connections are important for professional success.

Besides personal connections, the women we interviewed found their way into the games industry through their choice of a specific occupational area, such as PR or human resources and only secondarily through the choice to work in the games industry. For instance, in the field of PR, career entrants usually start to work for agencies and if they have an interesting project with a customer, they may get the chance to switch to this customer. However, this sort of career path is shaped by the field of work and not on the industry you are working in.

Finally, and surprisingly, most of the women we spoke to (12/15) highlighted the coincidental circumstances that led to their accepting a job in the games industry. Many of the women interviewed emphasized the “*lucky*” coincidence that brought them into the video game industry. Their emphasis on coincidence may also be due to the fact that prior to their applications, the informants did not really consider the games industry as a potential work field (Consalvo, 2008, p. 186), but rather learned about it by chance through a job advertisement or the advice of fellow colleagues or friends. It is striking that women tend to characterize their career path as coincidental, instead of reflecting on it as part of a strategic plan (Macha, 2000, p. 155; Seeg, 2000, p. 77). Macha (2000, p. 175) asserts that female tenured professors, too, tend to see their careers as based on chance. Rather than highlighting their own strengths and skills, they point to advertisements for open positions as the basis for the pursuit of particular positions. On the one hand one may argue that women in particular notice moments of coincidence. On the other hand, this also shows that women do not like to talk about their “*career*,” a word that connotes purposefulness and strategic planning, since this is apparently seen as “*un-female*” (Macha, 2000, p. 154f.). Women then resolve this discrepancy by outlining their own career paths as coincidental, Macha maintains. This also holds true for some of our informants’ statements. Trinity, editor in chief of a well-known German games magazine, recounts that she regularly visited the publishing company she now works for in her schooldays and during her training. Nevertheless she feels that it is a huge coincidence that the publishing company is located in her hometown and offered her a job.

One aspiration of this study was to identify some “*stepping stones*” for women in the games industry, but this is hardly possible in light of the diversity of experiences across the sample of

informants. The frequency among our informants to characterize their job attainment as coincidental makes it difficult to identify any typical career path today – all career paths appear, from subject self-reports, to have been highly individual. However, an academic education appeared in all cases to be a must. Nevertheless, one interesting finding is that, for those informants who connected with the games industry during their studies, in the context of an internship or a project in this field, they liked the atmosphere and consequently decided to work in it. This leads us to the next topic: the work-life-balance.

Work-Life Balance

Work is central to our lives and we are identified by the work we do (Gini, 1998). Therefore, work has become a central part of a person's identity (Simpson, 2004) and both men and women have to find strategies to cope with work challenges and requirements.

According to Deuze, Martin and Allen (2007) the “professional identity” of people working in the games industry is especially marked by a culture of long hours. This is why – according to the experts – a healthy work-life balance is essential. The German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (2005) defines “work-life-balance” as the “intelligent interconnection of work and private life against the backdrop of a changed and dynamically changing work and living environment” (p. 4). For Prantl (2005) finding a “balance between the two main areas of life – ‘work’ and ‘leisure’ [...] is one of the greatest challenges of our time” (p. 329). In this context, product designer Madison explains: “*Yes, it is really important for me to find a ‘right’ work-life balance. Anything else will make me unhappy. Of course I don’t work ‘only’ eight hours a day, I do work a bit more than that.*”

The games industry is famous for its so-called ‘crunch times’ – the stressful time just before the completion of a project. This long-hours culture is also discussed by the International Game Developers Association (IGDA) Quality of Life White Paper (2004). The study argues that almost “three developers out of five report working 46 hours or more in a typical week (38.1% say 46-55 hours, 19.7% say over 55)” (IGDA, 2004, p. 18). In our own study, Zelda, PR-manager in a global company since 2008, points out that “*it was common to work 12 hours a day. From my perspective that was way too much.*” While Zelda reports that her company now has a works council which keeps an eye on working time, she is still rarely able to even take a one hour lunch during crunch times. The IGDA report describes ‘crunch time’ as “omnipresent, whether before every milestone (57.2%), during beta (20.7%) or on at least a monthly basis (16.7%). Only 2.4% of respondents report that their company never has any crunch at all” (p. 18). During a crunch period, people commonly work 65 to 80 hours a week. Paine, senior PR-manager of a large German development studio, explains that “*when it comes to crunch time, there is hardly any leisure time.*” Simpson (1998) concludes that long hours are the top pressure experienced by both men and women in companies. Several other international studies confirm these results (Consalvo, 2008; Prescott & Bogg, 2011a/b).

But despite the recognition of a long-hours culture, all the women we spoke with express a positive attitude toward their work-life-balance in general. For example Juno, 44 years old and head of human resources of a German online games provider tells us: “*I like my job and I probably belong to the workaholics and there are intense days, but it’s fun. In general we do look out so that a healthy work-life balance is possible for everyone.*” In this respect, both the experts but also the companies are conscious of and seek to avoid the accumulation of overtime

hours. Beyond that, the experts interviewed have developed strategies to maintain a healthy work-life balance, such as working out regularly or resting during the weekends: *“Nevertheless I still have enough time and the weekends are sacred to me. Only under exceptional circumstances, I will work then. Apart from that, I always try to actually have some leisure time and to recharge my batteries”* (Madison, product director). Peach explains: *“I try to keep my computer turned off during the weekends and not to play on my iPad, either; indeed, I try to be offline.”*

However, it has to be pointed out that especially for women who have or want to have children the long-hours culture seem to be problematic. *“When the release of a game is basically around the corner, I easily work ten to twelve hours a day. This would hardly be doable if I had a child”* Paine explains. In contrast to women in the games industry “the majority of the men were married and had children” (Prescott & Bogg, 2011a, p. 22). One problem is associated with this, according to Eleanor, who has been working in the games industry for almost 10 years and now occupies a managerial position: *“You always have a bad conscience. And you cannot be in the same place at the same time.”* As a result, because of the long-hours culture in the gaming industry, combining work with other roles – especially motherhood – can be viewed as a major disadvantage for women in the video game industry. Moreover, a lot of the experts underline that motherhood creates difficult issues, especially concerning management positions. Lucy (senior business manager in the field of mobile games) states: *“It is very hard for women with a family life to work in executive positions.”* In this context, it is not only the working culture of the game industry which is problematic for women with families but is especially pronounced for women in management positions. *“You need 24 hours a day to be a good mother – to spend time with your kids and be a manager,”* said Eleanor. This may also be the reason that so few women work in management positions in the games industry. Among our informant group, only four of 15 women have children.

Studies on women’s career progression observe that women have to face several career barriers in the games industry besides the issue of long hours (Haines, 2004; Prescott & Bogg, 2011a/b; 2013a/b). So we asked our informants if, despite the fact that they are happy with their job, there are any gender difficulties they have had to cope with.

Career Barriers for Women Working in the Game Industry?

Barriers have been defined as “events or conditions, as much internal to the person, as those of his/her environment, that make professional progress difficult” (Swanson & Woitke, 1997, p. 446). According to Haines (2004) distinctive career barriers emerge for women working in the games industry. For this reason one question addressed the topic of special gender barriers. All of our experts say that even though they recognize that the game industry is mainly male-dominated, no gender-based barriers were encountered by them individually. This report was surprising. We hypothesized that our informants responded in this way because all of the interviewees are very self-confident, and they do not like to be treated in a special way because of their gender, but want to be seen as equal partners and to be judged on their own merits: *“I want to convince people with my competence and my skills, to stand my ground, and I do not want to exploit the fact that there are so few women,”* our expert Lucy emphasizes.

So we asked them if there were perhaps other challenges with which they had to cope. In contrast to their previous statements all told us that they faced difficulties. These difficulties are especially related to certain gender stereotypes.

One crucial challenge is to deal with the prejudice that women cannot play computer games. *“Of course, it was assumed at first that I don’t play games eight hours a day and that I therefore don’t know anything about PC games,”* Peach (senior consultant) explains. A lot of our experts shared the experience that men think they are the only ones with skills in video gaming. These reports can also be found in other studies. Haines (2004) asked in her study “why are there so few women in games?” and the explanation put forward was that “girls don’t play games” (p.7). Moreover, Terlecki et al. (2011) found out that in their Swedish study “men also felt more skilled at video game playing than women” (p. 29). However, as we already pointed out, women do play games: 10.8 million German women (44 percent of gamers) play regularly (BIU, 2013a). There are differences in playing, however. In general, girls and women play less and prefer different games from males. Carmen, game tester for the age rating of digital games in Germany, elucidates her perception of those differences: *“Men are rather interested in games that involve strategy, combat, and action. When it comes to casual games, however, women make up the majority of gamers. Think about all the Facebook games that have emerged— here, the number of female gamers is higher than the number of male gamers.”* Studies support Carmen’s impression: In general women prefer casual games, such as movement, music, and social games (BIU, 2013e). Casual games have low access barriers, are easy to understand, and may be played without previous knowledge. Our informants, too, are strongly interested in casual games. In our own sample, all the women we interviewed reported playing games, although of different kinds, and to different extents. When asked about their favourite games, our experts reported an extensive range, from League of Legends (Carla), to Anno 2070 (Faith), Kingdom Rush (Madison), Heavy Rain (Giana), and Batman: Arkham Asylum (Paine). It should be noted that our study sample comprised both ‘hardcore’ as well as casual gamers, although playing games is not actually a condition to enter the business.

Another common gender stereotype and also a reason often proffered to explain why there are so few women in the game industry, is that women are not interested in technology (Haines, 2004, p. 8). Carmen (who is very interested in technology) recalled that when she tried to enter a conversation about games with boys at school, *“there was a consternated silence. They did not mean harm, but apparently I as woman was not intended to join their conversation and know more about the topic. Their reactions on the nonverbal plane were just very indicative.”*

Another difficulty may be posed by an almost aggressively masculine work atmosphere: *“I have had to deal with certain jokes and comments, which were aimed at hitting below the belt,”* recalled Lucy. And then she adds: *“But it’s very subjective whether one perceives this as discrimination or not”*. When it comes to joking, the experts told us that you must have the competence to talk back in a “charming” way. Overall, it must be the goal that *“men have to respect you. As a woman one needs to win recognition,”* Carla (head of user experience) asserts. Paine (senior PR-manager of an international German game developer) explains that women in this industry should not be too “sensitive” otherwise they would have considerable problems dealing with the rough manners and language used in male-dominated work teams. It seems that you have to be very tough being a woman in the games industry.

As a consequence, it may be more difficult for women to integrate themselves into existing male-dominated networks within the game industry. Elaine (former advisor and consultant for a German computer game association) provides further insight into her first years in the games industry: *“When I wanted to join in a conversation, the circle of men closed.”* In part, women are directly excluded from networks and conversations, which creates potential difficulties when trying to make a career in this industry. Simpson (1998) states that “men have been found to be culturally active in creating an environment where women do not flourish” (p. 45), a problem that is evident in our interviewees’ experiences of being excluded from such networks. This may also be a reason why so few women have jobs in senior or executive positions as Eleanor points out: *“I know fifty or sixty directors and there are only three women among them. I have been working in this sector for almost twelve years and nothing has really changed.”* In a similar vein, Peach admits: *“I do see that positions that need to be filled tend to be filled by men.”* This could be seen as another example of the previously mentioned “glass ceiling effect” (Cotter et al. 2001).

That women are assistants is another marginalizing stereotype. To quote Maria, a 32-year-old business analyst for a German online games provider: *“Sometimes it happens at a fair that one is branded as an assistant or stand personnel.”* This contempt she simply tries to ignore or to endure with humor as her strategy. In addition, she is annoyed about the frequent use of *“booth babes,”* who she feels should not represent the image of women in the industry. Ray (2004) argues that the objectifying use of these women contributes to the image that the games industry is only for men.

In addition to dealing with difficulties at the workplace, another reason women have doubts as to whether entering the games industry is right for them may be related to common game content such as the representation of women in games. *“Many producers prefer their protagonists with ample bosoms and tight thongs. As a woman, you have to agree with that and be willing to work on such an image of women,”* said Juno, a 44 year old head of human resources of a German online games provider. It is now well-established that the “representation of female and male characters in games is often highly hyper-feminized and hypermasculinized, with few opportunities for representing other differences, including race, ability and disability, and alternative body types” (Jenson, Fisher & de Castell, 2011, p. 149).

To summarize, our informants told us about how women have to fight for their position more than men, and as well they have to deal with prejudices and gender stereotypes. Therefore, they have to be self-confident working in this industry. In the words of one interviewee, the game industry is not a workplace for the faint-hearted. But now the question also arises as to whether women in male-dominated sectors may perceive some advantages or see benefits to working there.

Advantages of and for women

Identifying disadvantages for women working in the games industry doesn’t tell the whole story. Indeed, study informants talked a lot about their positive attitude towards their jobs. They mentioned various gender-related advantages, such as advantages for the companies, for the target group-orientation of the products, for the product, for the teams, and – on a personal level – for themselves as well.

The interviews show that for companies, there are manifold reasons for supporting and specifically encouraging women. Due to demographic changes, the lack of available professionals is often cited as a central concern, something our informants address as well. Lara explains: *“We are not the only one in Germany looking for employees,”* said Elaine, suggesting that the skills shortage does worry the games industry, a conclusion that is also reached by Teipen (2008) in her research. Therefore it becomes increasingly important for companies to attract qualified female employees to augment available qualified labour. Additionally, companies frequently point to the diversity-approach and act on the assumption that *“products and processes from development to distribution change if mixed teams – as opposed to relatively homogeneous age and culture groups – engage with the needs and desires of costumers”* (Ihsen, 2010, p. 799). Consequently, some companies aim to attract diverse professionals to defuse the occupational segregation between men and women (Heintz & Nadei, 1998, p. 80). To support more women in the games business, the German government and the German industry have initiated projects such as *“Women in Games Jobs,” “Geekettes,” “Girls Days,”* etc. So women do benefit from *“various initiatives for women in the games industry,”* as informant Paine points out.

Moreover, some of the women we interviewed indicate that when it comes to gaming, men and women have different attitudes and are interested in different games. Carla for instance explains: *“For core-games, men are the main target group. There are indeed differences. Men are rather interested in games that involve strategy, fights, and action. For casual games, however, women make up a greater part of the gamer group.”* It is because of the users’ different interests and consequently their different needs that some of our informants assert that it would be sensible to have more women taking an active part in the development of games. From her meta-perspective as speaker of Game Association, Elaine states: *“Women look at these products with an entirely different perspective and know how to address female users, a target-group that is becoming increasingly important in the industry.”* For this reason, attention has been paid to the conscious employment of women at the company where Juno works (German online games provider): *“It work one-third ladies in our company. This is also important because our games are played to 70% of women.”* Her company in this case is no exception. According to Carla, head of user experience of a big German online games provider, women are a key target group for companies working in the field of casual online games. This becomes evident in the percentage of female programmers involved in the production process, yet even more so on the executive level, for in her company many women manage divisions. It is therefore not surprising that game companies which predominantly produce games for a female audience specifically recruit women. Giana freely acknowledges that from her perspective this is exactly why she has been offered her job as game designer: *“My company was looking for a game designer that could develop a ‘women’s game.’ They wanted to expand their target-group and enlarge their portfolio.”* She therefore assumes that she *“did get a bonus”* on her application for being a woman. In contrast, two other informants assess the situation differently. Carla does not believe that *“women design different games than men.”* According to her, the idea of a *“bonus for women”* is not applicable. As managing director Eleanor is also skeptical. Yet women certainly approach games with *“different sets of questions”* and may well employ *“a different method in designing games.”* For Consalvo (2008), the inclusion of women in the design of games will also increase the chance that more games will be developed that appeal to both sexes and reach a larger audience.

Besides the skills shortage and the target-group orientation of the products our informants also raise the idea of mixed teams and emphasize that the teamwork of both men and women is enriching:

- “I believe that the collaboration of men and women in mixed teams is [...] is beneficial for the industry.” (Elaine, consultant for a computer game association)
- “There needs to be a healthy balance in the teams, that’s just a great advantage and enrichment.” (Lara, managing director)
- “I think that if more women enter the games industry, this will have a positive effect.” (Maria, business analyst).
- “Companies with women in management positions are not better because women are better, but because a variety of perspectives and strengths is essential.” (Juno, head of human resources)

One reason why companies cherish a variety of perspectives, particularly in their management positions, is, according to Juno, their success: *“Companies with female executive staff [are] verifiably more successful.”* This argument, however, is debatable. On the one hand, empirical studies find a positive correlation between women in executive positions and company performance (Richard et al., 2006; Wolfers, 2006; Rose, 2007). On the other hand, Börner, Keding and Hüttermann (2012) argue that “current relevant research does not allow the conclusion that gender diversity entails a general economic advantage”.

The economic success of mixed teams notwithstanding, the informants also mention the beneficial working atmosphere within these teams. Women are considered good *“team-players [who] can communicate well, moderate discussions and bring people together. And this is definitely an advantage in a job where a lot of work is done in projects, working together with many people”* (Lara). Informants stressed that women in team leadership roles tend to foster productive teamwork. Giana maintains that: *“Women have a knack for leading teams. Yet this happens far too seldom.”* The argument for more women in the games industry is therefore primarily based on a positive working atmosphere and a culture of communication and conduct within the company. From the perspective of the industry, these do constitute good reasons for why women should be encouraged to enter the field.

To be a woman in a men’s domain can also be used strategically by the companies as well as in one’s career. Maria states: *“From my experience the few women working in the game development sector are often used as a positive example for the progressive policy of the company.”* In this context, the women are important for the company’s image and they can strategically use this image to gain a leading role and to gather a sort of power. To be noticed as a person of a minority they are likewise used by the PR-department for good publicity, as Giana points out. This situation is then used by some women to progress in their career. In this way, it may be a benefit to be the ‘token woman’. This opinion stands in contrast to the previous statements made in the interviews: some of the experts have stated that they do not want special treatment just because they are women. Here we see women juggling with the contradictions of a gendered workplace. Some use the fact of being a woman in this male-dominated sector to their strategic advantage and others reject the idea categorically or they may do both!

Next, personal benefits in terms of personality development are mentioned: *“I think that working in the games sector or in a male-dominated field has greatly enhanced my personality as to a*

very autonomous, self-confident, free-thinking person. I believe that this has supported my habits in a positive sense” (Peach, senior consultant). Indeed, most of our informants appeared very self-confident during the interviews. Taking a look at attributes with which the experts characterize themselves, some patterns could be found. On the one hand, they are curious and open to new situations, they are goal-oriented and love the element of competition, suggesting that they are dynamic and energetic – attributes which also fit the characterization of the games industry very well. On the other hand, they describe themselves as good listeners, as conscientious and reliable, attributes especially helpful for working and collaborating in teams.

Conclusion

Our analysis of the interviews with our sample of fifteen informants from a range of positions within the German games industry reveals a differentiated picture of the situation for women. The career paths of these women proved to be highly individual, making it hard to identify particular stepping stones for women interested in entering the industry. We did however find that working on game-projects during one’s studies, and taking specific academic courses concerned with games, as well as having or making social contacts with others in the industry constitute major support structures for getting a job in the business.

For our informants, their motivation for getting a job in the games industry was based on the unconventional, relaxed atmosphere and the fact that the industry is seen by them as being creative and innovative. We stress, however, that it did not prove to be women’s interest in gaming that it was decisive in their entering this sector. The interviewed women did not enter the games industry because of their own fascination with gaming. By contrast, most of the men in the games industry are committed gamers, as Lara reports: *“Most of the male employees here are dedicated to gaming and wanted to work here because they wanted to turn their hobby into a career. For the women here this is not true.”* That would represent a significant difference in motivation: unlike women, more men may seek to turn their hobby into their career (Teipen, 2008). Even though their own passion for gaming has thus not been the main reason for our informants’ entry to the field, the interviews do show that all of them are in fact fascinated by video and computer games. They play both on the job and during their leisure time and our interviews suggest that they very much identify with the medium as well as with the profession. For the informants, this constitutes a great motivation and characterizes the special atmosphere of their workplace: team work with like-minded people. Friendly and casual interactions are therefore common in the industry. The informants have great passion for their job and they do not see their work as a necessary duty but value self-realization and the possibility of implementing their own ideas and being creative and self-determined. Not least the factor of “enjoying one’s work” surfaces in all of the interviews.

Our results suggest that, for women, working in the games industry is a double-edged sword. On the one hand the rule is: Be tough, don’t be girlish. On the other hand female attributes like communication and team skills, as well as other perspectives or ideas are expressly valued as the distinctive contributions women can make to the industry. In this context our study aimed at tracing the experiences that women working in the male-dominated games industry have had. In light of a skills shortage, the presumed advantages of mixed teams and particularly with a view to women as a target-group the informants cite that their expert knowledge and their

competencies are sought after, yet they seem to have access only to particular fields of work in the industry. Their references to occupations to which women have an affinity suggest the vertical segregation of the industry (Prescott & Bogg, 2011b). Moreover, the interviews reveal the challenges of bringing a “female working capacity” into a male culture of work. Stereotypes, such as women’s lack of interest in technology or lack of competency in gaming, as well as game contents that are frequently geared to a male demographic and the fact that women need to prove themselves in a male-dominated business culture, were mentioned in this context.

Additionally, the informants raised the problem of balancing their work and family life. Women are required to stand their ground in their profession, while at the same time caring for their families. This is aggravated by the characteristically high workload and the fast-paced development of video game products that make it impossible to take longer leaves of absence. Although these challenges apply to both men and women in the industry, the double burden of work and family is especially relevant for women and does figure as a significant criterion in the choice and practice of an occupation (Heintz & Nadai, 1998). Most of the informants, however, do not conceive of these issues as actual barriers but rather see them as challenges to be coped with.

The occupational biographies of women sketched here make clear that there is no “royal road” into the games industry; in recent years, however, the business has become increasingly professionalized. Professionalization is a process focused on “the acquisition and codification of academic expert knowledge, [...] the development of a specific professional ethics, [...] the specification of entrance requirements for particular areas of work or the establishment of occupational associations that define and represent the interests of the profession relatively autonomously” (Wetterer, 1992, p. 7). More and more frequently, specialists are needed to maintain global competition. A well-grounded education is therefore essential for enduring in the games industry, our informants contend – (almost) all of whom have graduated from university. The majority of them, however, have not studied in a games-related program but rather entered the industry a career transition. In light of newly established and games-specific courses of studies and the evolving video game market, the question needs to be raised whether the entry into the industry by means of a career change will continue to be the best practice for leveraging more women into the industry.

As Lara mentions, specialists for games design and programming are increasingly sought after. In the future it will thus be more and more difficult to enter the industry without specialized training. Will women actually benefit from the development and the growing supply of such games-specific courses of studies? Research draws precisely this conclusion: Games-specific study programs with projects and organized internships are particularly interesting for women, as they not only afford a direct entry into the industry, but also boost their self-confidence to work in a male-dominated field (Fullerton et al., 2008). Yet research in gender studies suggests that processes of professionalization have historically also simultaneously entailed “processes of exclusion or later at least the marginalization of women” (Wetterer, 1993, p. 12, translated). For the games industry, we hope that this story will not repeat.

References

- Allmendinger, J., Gieseck, J. & Heisig, J.P. (2009). *Einstiegswege in den arbeitsmarkt*. Berlin: WZB.
- BIU (2013a). *Gamer in Deutschland*. Retrieved 15 July 2013 from <http://www.biu-online.de/de/fakten/gamerstatistiken/gamer-in-deutschland.html>
- BIU (2013b). *Marktzahlen*. Retrieved 30 September 2013 from <http://www.biu-online.de/de/fakten/marktzahlen/datentraeger-und-downloads.html>
- BIU (2013c). *Standort Deutschland*. Retrieved 30 September 2013 from <http://www.biu-online.de/de/themen/standort-deutschland/games-industrie.html>
- Bryce, J. & Rutter, J. (eds.) (2002). *Killing like a girl: Gendered gaming and girl gamers' visibility*. Finland: University of Tampere Press.
- Cockburn, C. (1985). *The machinery of dominance: Women, men and technical know-how*. London: Pluto Press.
- Consalvo, M. (2008). Crunched by passion. Women game developers and workplace challenges. In: Y. B. Kafai, C. Heeter, J. Denner & J. Yun (eds), *Beyond Barbie and Mortal Kombat: New perspectives on gender and gaming* (pp. 177-191). Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Cotter, D. A., Hermsen, J., Ovadia, S. & Vanneman, R. (2001). The glass ceiling effect. In: *Social Forces*, 80(2), 655–681.
- Deeke, A. (1995). Experteninterviews – ein methodologisches und forschungspraktisches Problem. In A. Brinkmann, A. Deeke & B. Völkle (eds.), *Experteninterviews in der arbeitsmarktforschung: Diskussionsbeiträge zu methodischen fragen und praktischen erfahrungen* (pp. 7-22). Nürnberg, Inst. für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung.
- Deuze, M., Martin, C.B. & Allen, C. (2007). The professional identity of game workers. *Convergence: The international journal of research into new media technologies*, 13(4), 335-353.
- Dietz, M., Röttger, Chr. & Szameitat, J. (2011). *Betriebliche personalsuche und stellenbesetzungen: Neueinstellungen gelingen am besten über persönliche Kontakte*. IAB-Kurzbericht, Nürnberg.
- Donovan, T. (2010). *Replay: The history of video games*. East Sussex, England: Yellow Ant.
- Dyer-Whitford, N. & Sharman, Z. (2005). The political economy of Canada's video and computer game industry. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 30(2), 187-210.
- Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association (ELSPA) *White paper*. Retrieved 30. September 2013 from <http://www.cs.lamar.edu/faculty/osborne/COSC1172/elspawhitepaper3.pdf>
- ESA (2013). *Essential Facts about the computer and video game industry*. Retrieved 30 September 2013 from http://www.theesa.com/facts/pdfs/ESA_EF_2013.pdf.
- Fullerton, T., Fron, J., Pearce, C. & Morie, J. (2008). Getting girls into the game: Toward a “virtuous cycle.” In: Y., B. Kafai, C. Heeter, J. Denner & J., Y. Sun (eds.), *Beyond Barbie and Mortal Kombat. New perspectives on gender and gaming*, (pp. 161-176). Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Gini, A. (1998). Work, identity and self: How we are formed by the work we do. *Journal of Business ethics*, 17(70), 707-714.
- Gläser, J. & Laudel, G. (2004). *Experteninterviews und qualitative inhaltsanalyse als instrumente rekonstruierender untersuchungen*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

- Graner Ray, S. (2004). *Gender inclusive game design: Expanding the market*. Hingham Mass: Charles River Media.
- Haines, L. (2004). *Why are there so few women in games?* Research for media training North West September. Retrieved 30 September 2013 from http://archives.igda.org/women/MTNW_Women-in-Games_Sep04.pdf
- Heintz, B. & Nadia, E. (1998). Geschlecht und kontext: De-Institutionalisierungsprozesse und geschlechtliche differenzierung. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 27 (2), 75-93.
- Hoppenstedt (2012): Jung, dynamisch, männlich – die games-branchen in Deutschland. In: *Themen-portal: Wirtschaft und unterhaltung*. Retrieved 15 July 2013 from <http://www.themenportal.de/wirtschaft/jung-dynamisch-maennlich-die-games-branchen-in-deutschland-67420>
- Huizinga, J. (1955). *Homo ludens: A study of the play-element in culture*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- IGDA (2004). Quality of life. White paper, *International Game Developers Association*. Retrieved 30. September 2013 from http://www.igda.org/sites/default/files/IGDA_QualityOfLife_WhitePaper.pdf
- Ihsen, S. (2010). Ingenieurinnen: Frauen in einer männerdomäne. In R. Becker & B. Kortendiek (eds), *Handbuch frauen- und geschlechterforschung: Theorie, methoden, empirie*. 3., erw. und durchges. Aufl. Wiesbaden: VS, 799 - 805.
- Jenson, J., Fisher, S., & de Castell, S. (2011). Disrupting the gender order: Leveling up and claiming space in an afterschool gaming club. *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology*, 3(1), 149-169.
- Kanter, R., M. (1977). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Kreimer, M. (2009). *Ökonomie der geschlechterdifferenz: Zur persistenz von gender gaps*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Krotoski, A. (2004). Chicks and joysticks: An exploration of women and gaming. *White paper, The Entertainment & Leisure Software Publishers Association*, 1-36.
- Lindstädt, H., Fehr, K. & Wolff, M. (2011). Frauen in führungspositionen: Auswirkungen auf den unternehmenserfolg. Im *Auftrag des Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend*. Retrieved 30 September 2013 from http://www.bmfsfj.de/RedaktionBMFSFJ/Abteilung4/Anlagen__binaer/frauen-in-f_C3_BChrungspositionen-kurze-fassung,property=blob,bereich=bmfsfj,sprache=de,rwb=true.pdf
- Macha, H. (2000). *Erfolgreiche frauen: Wie sie wurden, was sie sind*. Frankfurt/New York: Campus Fachbuch.
- Meuser, M. & Nagel, U. (1997). Das experteninterview – Wissenssoziologische voraussetzungen und methodische durchführung. In B. Friebertshäuser & A. Prengel (eds.), *Handbuch qualitativer forschungsmethoden in der erziehungswissenschaft* (pp. 481-491). Weinheim/München: Juventa.
- Meuser, M. & Nagel, U. (2010). ExpertInneninterview – Zur rekonstruktion spezialisierten Sonderwissens. In R. Becker & B. Kortendiek (eds.), *Handbuch frauen- und geschlechterforschung: Theorie, methoden, empirie* (pp. 376-379). Wiesbaden: VS, Verl. für Sozialwiss.
- Müller-Lietzkow, J., Bouncken, B. & Seufert, W. (2006). *Gegenwart und zukunft der computerspiel-industrie in Deutschland*. Dornach: Entertainment Verlag.
- Prescott, J. & Bogg, J. (2011a). Career attitudes of men and women working in the computer games industry. *Eludamos: Journal for Computer Game Culture*, 5(1), 7-28.

- Prescott, J. & Bogg, J. (2011b). Segregation in a male-dominated industry: Women working in the computer games industry. *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology*, 3 (1), 205–227.
- Prescott, J. & Bogg, J. (2013a). *Gendered occupational differences in science, engineering, and technology careers*. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference.
- Prescott, J. & Bogg, J. (2013b). The gendered identity of women in the games industry. *Eludamos: Journal for Computer Game Culture*, 7 (1), 55–67.
- Rastetter, D. (1998). Männerbund management: Ist gleichstellung von frauen und männern trotz wirksamer archaischer gegenkräfte möglich? *Management (ZfP 2/98)*, 167-186.
- Richard, O., Ford, D. & Ismail, K. (2006). Exploring the performance effects of visible attribute diversity: The moderating role of span of control and organizational life cycle. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17 (12), 2091-2109.
- Rose, C. (2007). Does female board representation influence firm performance? The Danish evidence. *Corporate Governance*, 15 (2), 404-413.
- Simpson, R. (1998). Presenteeism, power and organizational change: Long hours as a career barrier and the impact on the working lives of women managers. *British Journal of Management communication quarterly*, 9 (s1), 37-50.
- Simpson, R. (2004). Masculinity at work: The experiences of men in female dominated occupations. *Work, Employment and Society*, 18 (2), 349-368.
- Skillset (2006). *Employment census: The results of the sixth census of the audio visual industries*. Retrieved 30 September 2013 from http://www.creativeskillset.org/uploads/pdf/asset_9920.pdf?6
- Skillset (2009). *Employment census: The results of the seventh census of the creative media industries December 2009. The Sector Skills Council for Creative Media*. Retrieved 30 September 2013 from http://www.creativeskillset.org/uploads/pdf/asset_14487.pdf
- Swanson, J. L. & Woitke, M.B. (1997). Theory into practice in career assessment for women: Assessment and interventions regarding perceived career barriers. *Journal of career assessment*, 5(4), 443-462.
- Teipen, C. (2008): Work and employment in creative industries: The video games industry in Germany, Sweden and Poland. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 29 (3), 309-335.
- Terlecki, M., Brown, J., Harner-Steciw, L., Irvin-Hannum, J., Marchetto-Ryan, N., Ruhl, L. & Wiggins, J. (2011). Sex differences and similarities in video game experience, preferences, and self-efficacy: Implications for the gaming industry. *Current Psychology*, 30, 22–33.
- Toledano, G. (2013, January). Women and video gaming's dirty little secrets. *Forbes*, Retrieved 30 September 2013 from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeswomanfiles/2013/01/18/women-and-video-gamings-dirty-little-secrets/>
- Weber, R. (2013). Sony's house wants female devs on PS4. *GamesIndustry.Biz*. Retrieved 30 September 2013 from <http://www.gamesindustry.biz/articles/2013-04-05-sonys-house-wants-female-devs-on-ps4>
- Weckerle, A. (2013). *Civility in the digital age: How companies and people can triumph over haters, trolls bullies and other jerks*. Pearson Education.
- Wetterer, A. (2002): *Arbeitsteilung und geschlechterkonstruktion: "Gender at work" in theoretischer und historischer Perspektive*. Konstanz: UVK.

Wolfers, J. (2006). Diagnosing discrimination: Stock returns and CEO gender. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 4 (2-3), 531-541.