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THROUGH ONLINE VIDEO GAMES**

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Examiner: Anna Jia Gander
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**MIGRANT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL EMBEDDEDNESS BY MODALITY SWITCHING
THROUGH ONLINE VIDEO GAMES**

SHOLEH TAKHT KOOSEH

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Abstract:

Online video games are a mass phenomenon in today's life that have become a leisure activity for many people, including children. One feature of the online video games is meeting others with more common interests which can help children find social networks to share common values and interests. The present study provides on the social outcomes of online video games for migrant children, especially in terms of social interactions. In this regard, the transference of communication from online to offline setting that can lead to bridging online weak ties are often neglected. Such communication practice for migrant children can help them develop relationship and social embeddedness within the host community children. This study used a qualitative method to collected data from 10 migrant children living in Gothenburg, Sweden, who had recently moved to Sweden. The results showed that the migrant children interacted with the host community children via online video games, and this had a positive impact on their social embeddedness. The findings also showed that modality switching from online to offline setting increased children's level of trust, and significantly helped them achieve a source of information and social embeddedness. Moreover, it was found that migrant gamers were generally embedded within the host community children. Finally, the study suggests that communication via online video games and transference of online interactions to offline setting can have positive social outcomes for migrant children.

Keywords: Migrant children, Online video game (OVG), Modality switching, Social embeddedness, Communication, Interaction, online weak ties.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

CMC	Computer Mediated Communication
OVG	Online Video Game
OVGs	Online Video Games

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 The study background

Globalization and technology are two factors that shape communication in today's world. Online video games (OVGs) are examples of the social communication channels, which provide people around world with both communication opportunities and leisure activities. This phenomenon has become a leisure activity regarding the development of network and communication channel, which greatly influences and contributes to social and interpersonal interactions. From the socialisation and communication perspectives, OVGs facilitate communication between individuals, and help them develop their interactions (Ducheneaut et al., 2006; Domahidi et al., 2013). OVGs are defined as a mass phenomenon. Online players are socially motivated to go online to meet and form new relationships with other games players (Lenhart et al., 2008; Yee, 2006; William & Smith, 2007). The literature on social relationship has highlighted that sharing leisure activities provide an opportunity to maintain social relationships. In particular, sharing leisure activities plays an essential role in children's social embeddedness in term of exploring new communication channels (Feld & Carter, 1998; Schaefer et al., 2011).

Members of the society develop and maintain relationships through the social interactions as the resource that connects people with similar interests. The social embeddedness stresses the importance of social aspects that increase personal development and psychological well-being, therefore maintaining interpersonal relationships (Demir & Weitekamp, 2007). One of the dimensions of social capital is bridging weak ties to find social support, which laid the foundation for networking, communication and connectivity with new acquaintances in a new environments to achieve social embeddedness and integration (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000).

1.2 The phenomenon of study

There has been a rapid increase in people entering other countries for different reasons. The process of migrating from one country to another has proved to have a huge impact on the families involved especially on children. Migrant children experience many different challenges as they attempt to adjust to the new environment. Migration can have consequence for children, including a break in the social capital and the problem of building up new relationships in a new environment. These challenges lead to a dilemma that cannot be taken for granted. There are problems that are significantly associated with immigration, which include segregation, anxiety, depression, and isolation (Sim & Fox, 2015).

Previous studies have found that there is a sudden decrease in leisure activities and socialisation for children in a new environment, which has a considerable impact on the child's social and personal development and well-being (Harinen, 2012; Sim & Fox, 2015). In this regard, there is an increasing concern about migrant children's lack of integration with the host community children, since there are faced with challenges in trying to communicate and develop interpersonal relationships in the new environment. A great number of earlier studies have focused on the factors that hinder inclusion in the new environment. However, very little attention has been paid to the role of communication through multiplayer OVGs, especially on how it influences the migrant children's relationships and social embeddedness with the host community children.

1.3 The study objective

The objective of the present study is to investigate the effect of communication via OVGs on migrant children and their ability to interact with the host community children. The key aspect of online communication via video games can be facilitated to bridge the communication gap

between migrant children and the host community children. The study attempts to understand the process of modality switching from online to offline setting via multiplayer OVGs to help migrant children interact with the host community children and bonding to the offline social capital as source of information in everyday life.

This thesis examines the relationship between online communication via OVGs, migrant children, and their social motivation to integrate with the host community children. The goal is to investigate whether communication via online weak ties through OVGs to transfers to offline settings, therefore improving bonding within the host community children. The study considers the social outcome of online communication via OVGs and transference if these communications to offline settings, leading to bonding and social embeddedness.

According to Collins and Freeman (2013) OVGs cannot support social outcomes for gamers' sociability. Furthermore, in their study on adults, Ducheneaut et al. (2006) argue that multiplayer OVGs most of the time only support online weak ties, and that players like being "alone together" during online games. However, the role of the online weak ties that may emerge during OVGs leading to bonding within the host community children such as interaction between gamers, and also the role of social embeddedness are often neglected (Ramires & Zhang, 2007; Cole & Griffiths, 2007; Williams et al., 2006).

The impact of OVGs on migrant children has not been investigated in the communication technology field. The present study attempts to understand the impact of communication technology on migrant children and their social embeddedness in the host community. Thus, to fill this educational void, this thesis examines the points of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) to investigate modality switching from online to offline settings, and its impact on migrant

children's ability to interact with the host community children through bridging of online weak ties and bonding that lead to increased social embeddedness in the new environment.

1.4 Research questions

The following research questions are designed to investigate:

1. How do online video games help migrant children socially embedded with the host community children?
2. How modality switching from online to offline setting through online video games can bridge the communication gap between migrant children and the host community children?

1.5 Definition of terms

The following definitions apply to this study:

Migrant children: The term migrant children refers to individuals aged 3-18 who have moved from one country to another and migrant families refers to families that have voluntarily moved from one country to another to find better opportunities for the job and living (Cox, 1992). Throughout this paper, the term migrant children refers to children who have voluntarily moved with their parent's.

Host community children: The phrase 'host community children' is used to describe children who were born and raised in Sweden or living in Sweden for more than ten years.

Social capital: According to James Coleman (1988) the term 'social capital' can be defined as follows: "a variety of entities with two elements in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structure, and facilitate certain actions of actors within the structure". Social capital is a network that facilitates co-operation among individuals that promotes being together with shared

norms and values in pursuit of common interests. Social capital refers to relationship among people complex ways that connects individuals like glue, helping them get social support. It also refers to a representative group of people who gather for the same purpose. The term also refers to social relationships for productive benefits.

Weak ties: As defined by Granovetter (1973) the term ‘weak ties’ defined, means interaction within society in the broader world. He mentions that communication with individuals through weak ties is paradoxically more critical than conversation with family and close friends. Weak ties connect individuals to essential information resources.

Social embeddedness: This term is crucial for Granovetter’s studies; however it is not defined explicitly. The word ‘embedded’ refers to a person in contrast to an atomized actor; this refers to a person’s choices and actions that are generated, and also the expected actions of other actors. The social embeddedness is related to one’s social relationships with other people. The individual social actions are influenced by the expected actions and behaviour of other individuals. Social embeddedness is related to interpersonal relationships promoting trust and cooperation.

Modality switching: The term ‘modality switching’ refers to the transference of online communication to offline settings and vice versa. Modality switching can enhance social interactions of those who meet new people in online settings and can possibly transfer this online communication to offline settings and face to face interactions (Ramirez et al., 2015).

1.6 Summary

This study provides a new insight into the social outcomes of OVGs for migrant children. Moreover, it describes the idea of bridging online weak ties and bonding social capital through modality switching from online to offline settings via multiplayer OVGs. Communication by modality switching from online to offline settings is likely to transfer online weak ties to offline

settings. In this regard, I strive to further the current understanding of social outcomes of OVGs for migrant children's social embeddedness. The remaining sections of the thesis are presented as follows:

Chapter two is the study of the literature. Chapter three consists of the theoretical background that is applied to the study to analyse the results. Chapter four examines the research methodology, how the researcher conducted the study, the motivation behind this choice, and the study population. Chapter four also provides research design and research map to demonstrate how the research questions were answered. Chapter five presents the study results. Following that in chapter six, the research questions are argued, and the significance of the findings is discussed. The final chapter concludes the thesis with a critical synthesising of findings to gain a new perspective on migrant children's social embeddedness in the host community children promoted by OVGs. In this chapter also, limitations, implications and suggestions for future studies are presented.

CHAPTER TWO THEORITICAL BACKGROUNDS AND LITRETUARE REVIEWS

There is a broad literatures on the importance of migration. However, there is a lack of evidence on the lives of migrant children and challenges they face to cope with the new environment. The present study attempts to examine the social outcomes of OVGs on migrant children's relationships in the new environment, with a focus on social aspect. Social capital is one of the theories of migration used by many researchers to examine migrant adult's social networks after migration (Ryan, 2011; Haikkola, 2011; Ryan et al., 2008). Social capital is viewed as one of the necessary resources for migrants. Through social capital migrants can access resources that help to explore everyday social life (Coleman, 1988). In addition, the CMC and OVGs provide an opportunity for players to communicate with others and have social interactions (Wang & Wellman, 2010; Klimmt & Hartmann, 2008). Therefore, this chapter is aimed at explaining those theories that are related to the study topic.

2.1 Social capital

Social capital is considered as a key access to the resources that help migrants find interactions with the new community. Social capital is theorised as an activity within a group of people that promotes integration and social embeddedness within the group (Putnam, 2000). The concept of 'social capital' was first used by Coleman (1988) to form a framework. It was later used as a theory that takes into account both online and offline social communication. Social capital is used to create interpersonal relationships, and is important in forming a social network of relationships among individuals who are connected to the same society; this has a positive effect on bond.

Social capital plays a significant role in today's life and strongly impacts social networking and interaction. Social capital increases individuals' productivity for those who work within the same network, and facilitates collaboration and mutual benefits. The theory discusses the value of collaboration and cooperation for the individual in trying to develop and maintain relationships. The term generally refers to the positive outcomes for the member of a social network, such as emotional help or the ability to mobilise other individuals and social embeddedness (Coleman, 1988; Adler & Kwon, 2002; Williams, 2006; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Diclemente et al. (2002) mentions the aphorisms that are linked to social capital, like "Rich together poor if separated". This is an accurate reflection of how social capital is a social concept through which universally people around the world can form coalitions that enables them to collaborate and interact in different situations. Social capital is a source of connection to social networks and source of information (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000). Putnam (2000) argues that although social capital is an important source of information, it has been declining in the United States over the past few years. He highlights that social capital can have negative implications, such as social disorder, decline in civic engagement, and leading to distrust among members of social capital communities. However, research evidence has also shown the positive functions of social capital, such as promoting trust, collaboration, and mutual support among those participating in social activities in the United States. Helliwell & Putnam (2004), believe that social capital can have positive implications for interpersonal interactions.

Paxton (1999) identifies a correlation between social capital and resources that permit a member of the social capital to connect to the information resources from the other members of their social network, and appear as effective information resources, opportunities for interaction, communication, and ability to form groups. Granovetter (1973) also mentions that access to thoes

outside of the one's close social capital provides a way of entry to non-redundant information resources; this has some advantages, including the resulting advantage of having interaction opportunities. Various lines of evidence suggest that several forms of social capital, such as strong ties and weak ties with other people, impact one's psychological well-being. However, many of exploratory research studies on this topic are heterogeneous, either relying on the negative or positive aspects of the online social capital in everyday life (Putman & Helliwell 2004; Bargh & Mckenna, 2004).

Putnam (2000) has discussed social capital with a focus on integration and group actions. Social capital includes two main resources, which are "intergeneration", including families and close friends and "community-based social ties". It is necessary to bear in mind that social capital is considered as a resource for social inequality since some groups have more advantages as compared to others (Bourdieu, 1986).

Social capital has been linked to the flow of resources through interaction and communication within social relationships. The main points of relationship through social capital is trust, trustworthiness, obligations, expectation, identity, and norms because social capital is embedded in social relations. Social capital provides one with interaction, collaborate, mutual support, trust, and integrate (Putnam, 2000).

Holland (2009) has considered the concept of social capital with regard to children's migrant and access to resources. He has also examined such factors such as gender, age, ethnicity and social class as influencing children's social capital. Hollands' study showed that bonding are related to children's social network. In addition, children try in various ways to create social ties in order to access to resources. The ability of children to access to weak ties provides them with opportunities to extend their social network. The more the individuals are connected to weak ties, the more they

become connected to the world, which enables them to get useful information. There are several optimistic and pessimistic views on the function of online social capital. Many researches have considered both the positive and negative aspects of online social capital. Kraut et al. (1988) mention that online settings and the CMC can have negative influences on one's interpersonal communication through reducing their social interactions. In addition, to the studies mentioned earlier, other researchers argue about some other negative social outcomes of using Internet. They argue that Internet isolates the users, and that individuals spend so much on online mediums which can disconnect them from the real life.

A considerable literature has developed around social interaction, which happens in various ways within the virtual community, Internet involvement, and trust (Kraut et al., 2002). Researchers confirm that online setting has a positive impact on the users, such as improving their interpersonal relationships and social interactions (Wellman et al., 2003; Wellman, Boase & Chen, 2002). Previous studies have established that email and chat rooms play a supportive role in human interactions through allowing the users to share their ideas and have coordinating actions to enhance online and offline social interactions (Price & Cappella, 2002). Furthermore, others believe that online settings provide an opportunity to improve both online and offline social activities (Wellman, 2006; Weston, 1997). The study needs to explore more fundamental characteristics of virtual community and to systematically discuss details regarding migrant children's access to social capital via OVGs. Migrant people lose their existing social capital and need to establish new relations in the new environment; this is a dilemma that is hard to deal with, especially for children. To understand social capital, it is required to explore one's both strong ties and weak ties in the new environment. Granovetter (1973; 1974) divides interpersonal ties into two main categories: strong ties and weak ties. He highlights "the strength of weak ties"; he argues

that there is a distinction between strong ties and weak ties. In this thesis, the author only focuses on the role of online weak ties in migrant children's communication and interactions in the new environment, therefore relevant studies to this topic are presented in in next section.

2.1.1 The important role of weak ties

The term 'weak ties' refers to communication with a broader world that encourages intergroup conversations, leading to enhanced distribution of information and resources and increased connection with other possibilities. These ties are paradoxically a lot more important for migrant people. Granovtter (1973) indicates that weak ties are very useful for individuals who have lost their pervious connections. Weak ties link people to social resources and information that may be absent in strong ties. Weak ties have the ability to bridge between two close-knit groups, and may be a crucial source of information and opportunity to connect to new sources of information and relationship. However, weak ties do not support the personal emotions. Weak ties play a significant role in providing opportunities for people to connect with more available people from their own social categories. In todays' modern life, people are faced with different challenges in trying to build social construction that is essential in individuals finding sources of information. Weak ties provide the opportunity for individuals to connect to valuable sources of information beyond close social capital. These ties play an essential role in connecting individuals with common interests (Granvotter, 1973; 1983). He brings the idea of "the strength of weak ties" in personal relationship and communication. The more weak ties, the faster growth of communication. Individuals who share interests are more likely to make use of weak ties to bridge to those who are in the social distance and create a new connection to the new social network. This definition highlights the fact that through weak ties, individuals are more able to interact with the world and; are more likely to

access the important resources of information that can make them more dynamic and innovative. Subsequent studies supported Granovetter's idea about "the strength of weak ties", and indicated that more weak ties work better than fewer strong ties. Weak ties in social networks are also associated with social support, access to sources of information, and psychological well-being (Fisher, 1982; Smith & Mackie, 2007; Barrera, 1986).

2.1.2 Bridging weak ties:

Granovetter (1973; 1983) explains that weak ties between members of social classes are likely to turn into close relationships. These weak ties often bridge between several social groups, enabling the individuals to access information and resources. Putnam (2000) highlights the essential role of bridging through weak ties in bonding social capital. Different social networks offer different kinds of interactions, resulting in different levels or qualities of social capital. The concept of bridging as suggested Putnam is confirmed to be a related idea. Bridging is related to social networks, which allow for building relationships and enhance trust among people. Bridging weak ties and bonding social capital are processes through which individuals from different cultures become able to create connections and social networks. Through weak ties, individuals can bridge social capital to make interpersonal relationships and perceive social support, social embeddedness, trust, and intimacy. Mark Granovetter believes that sources of information and bridging play an importance role in weak ties. He maintains that the best sources of information come from weak ties. Weak social ties have a significant role in discovering social networks and achieving social embeddedness. They also provide an opportunity to transfer novel information through social networks by bridging weak ties and bonding social capital. Interaction through weak ties, works in the same way as Putnam's concept of bridging weak ties and bonding social capital works (Williams, 2006).

It is worth noting that there is an importance connection between Granovetter's and Putnam's ideas on bridging weak ties and bonding social capital. Putnam (2000), argues that bridging weak ties and bonding social capital is inclusive and happens once individuals make interaction, communicate with others with different backgrounds within social networks, and try to foster social inclusion. He argues that these interactions are often fragile, but bridging is more likely to extend one's perspective on the new sources of information and open up opportunities for social and emotional support.

In this regard, many researchers have talked about the role of online settings in forming interpersonal relationships and use of face-to-face communication as sources of information (Berry, 1993; Walther et al., 1994; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Wellman & Wortley, 1990; Constant et al., 1996; Kraut & landmark, 1998). The literature on online networks and online interactions for example through OVGs acknowledges the idea that the CMC supports interaction through weak ties. Additionally, Internet can promote weak online connections through modality switching that consists of shifting between online to offline communication channels (Haythronthwaite, 1996; Wellman et al., 2006; William, 2006).

2.2 Modality switching

According to Ramirez and Zahang (2007) modality switching is used in the CMC and often refers to shifting from online to offline communication channel to find social capital and sources of information and perceived new interactions. According to Haythornthwaite (1968) shifting from online to offline communication settings plays a significant role in improving social ties, and can lead to close interactions enhancing social support. Later in 2005, she argued that online communication settings are considered to have a positive impact on interpersonal ties, and that

online communicators tend to support each other both emotionally and socially that has the potential to improve their interaction through weak ties. She found that some of online weak ties are as significant as strong ties or any offline ties.

Ramirez and Zahang (2007) argued that modality switching and transference of online communications to face-to-face interactions has the potential to enhance access to additional social information and works as some sort of social capital. Furthermore, Mckenna et al. (2002), found that individuals who had interacted through an online communication channel, when meeting physically showed greater willingness compared to those who had only had face-to-face communication. In a study on interpersonal relationship, Welther (1992) found that interaction via the CMC can have the same quality as those formed via face-to-face interaction. In 2002, he argued that one has the advantage of using the information available in the CMC to express themselves verbally and nonverbally. In addition to the CMC, video games play a significant role in interpersonal communication (Pena & Hancock, 2006). There is a high possibility that interactions formed through online settings can foster offline interpersonal relationships between people based on such principles as trust, mutual reciprocity, and norms of action. Ratan et al. (2010) examined the role of trust within the virtual environment once individuals create social interaction, and argued that communication via OVGs contributes to the development of trust and social support. Trust facilitates social interaction among online users, and gives them control over whom they want to communicate with and trust in online setting. Internet provides an environment that can foster the growth of trust. According to Parks and Roberts (1998), OVGs have developed from a global network through which users virtually interact, connect to each other, and establish communication. Online weak ties that lead to offline interactions may result in communications and connections that do not already exist.

Klimmt and Hartmann (2008), state that online communication via OVGs gives motivation to gamers to interact with other online gamers that can have a positive impact on online gamer's access to social support in everyday life. Furthermore, Cole and Griffiths (2007) demonstrated that via OVGs, the players were enabled to interact with and get social support from other online players. In the analysis by Haythornthwaite (2005) and Ramirez and Zhang (2007), it was found that modality switching enabled online users to transform online weak ties into offline connections. This transformation of information helps online players perceive other users' emotions communicate and interact with them once they meet offline. However, online game designers do not pay enough attention to these aspects of gaming.

The results on modality switching and shifting interactions from online to offline settings show the strength of online weak ties and social capital (Williams, 2006). Few studies have investigated the Putnam's theory (2000) of bridging weak ties and bonding social capital and the level of social support that is derived from online social ties. Identifying the role of online social support among online players and the transference of this support to real life is required to increase our understanding of migrant children, online gamers, and social embeddedness. Given what has been mentioned so far, it is significant to examine migrant children's social networks via OVGs. It helps us explore if migrant children who play OVGs can bridge the communication gap between online and offline settings, and if this can lead to real-life communications enhancing their access to social support in the new environment.

2.3 Social embeddedness

The idea of social embeddedness was first brought up by Granovetter in 1971. According to him, social embeddedness refers to individuals connecting to other actors through the links provided by

a social networks. Fischer (1982) stated that weak ties are strongly associated with social support and psychological well-being, because they have a positive influence on one's social interactions that provide them with happiness. Social interactions are important to individuals, and serve as sources of communication and social support (Smith & Mackie, 2007).

Barrera (1989) mentioned three concepts of social support, including perceived social support, enacted social support, and social embeddedness. Barrera perceived social support refers to what a person feels when connecting to others. Perceived social support relates to how the social networks influence the interactors, and it is determined by the environment that has supportive structures, informational and tangible, influencing the outcome of interactions among the actors.

Enacted social support refers to the situation in which one of the interactors is going through emotional distress, and the other party provides specific emotional and supportive actions. Dunkel-Schatter and Bennett (1990), present four sets of variables that relate to social support, including stress factors, recipient factors, relationship factors, and provider factors. The four variables determine the quality of support given to the affected party (Lahey & Drew, 1997; Dunkel-Schatter

& Bennett, 1990; Barrera, 1986). Barrera (1986), has discussed social embeddedness and integration. He identified communication and social interaction as highly significant factors in human primary connections. This primary communication serves as a source of social support.

Fischer (1982), maintains that weak ties are associated with psychological well-being, fulfilment, and social support. Studies on social embeddedness and integration define the social relationship, and suggest that these relationships can be used as a source of social support. In a study on social embeddedness, Granovetter (1995) argues that it is important for individuals to have social interaction with others, and not to isolate themselves from their social environment. He also believes that the quantity of social interactions is very important for embeddedness within the

social capital. Inner-group communication has the potential to connect online users, and online weak ties can be transferred to offline settings through modality switching, therefore allowing online users to take part in other social activities (Klimmt & Hartmann, 2008). The main proposition of the social capital theory is that interactions to find a precious source of support, also lead to social connections with people with similar interests, and help individuals to trust and embeddedness in social networks based on mutual efforts. Researchers define social capital as a source of information that includes potential resources allowing one to embeddedness within a group of people in order to develop and form a network of relationships. Williams et al. (2006), maintains that being a member of the social capital is beneficial for social embeddedness. Individuals can maintain existing ties and at the same time, connect to a new social network in order to receive social support. According to Lenhart et al. (2007), as a particular task, online gamers need to interact, communicate, and compete with other players. Furthermore, this kind of interaction can work as a source of information; likewise, during this joint activity, individuals need to be social, communicating, and committed to mutual efforts to receive and provide social support. The CMC is a source of social information whereby individuals connected to an online network can broaden their interpersonal ties. Through online interaction, people can develop friendships, which give them opportunities to communicate within online settings. McKenna and Bargh (2004), confirm that the CMC provides individuals a better opportunity to display and learn about each other's true selves. It also has an advantage for introverts as they can adapt to the new system without the pressures of face-to-face interaction. Additionally, the CMC provides friendship and communication that increase psychological well-being, interaction, and social support. The CMC develops socialisation, interaction, and communication for individuals or groups with shared values and mutual understanding, behaviour and attitudes, who are more likely

to build trust. Therefore, these kinds of interactions can lead to bond between individuals (Smith & Mackie, 2007; Demir & Weitekamp, 2007; La Greca & Harrison, 2005; Granovetter, 1973; Fischer, 1982; Smith and Mackie, 2007).

In the past thirty years, our knowledge in the field of online communication has been increasing that is the key point to understand the strength of weak ties in online settings. Wellman (1998), maintains that collaboration among members of online game groups enhances the exchange of information on the context, collaboration and teamwork between members, and improve their socialising, even if they do not exchange emotional support (Haythronthwaite, 2002; Granvetter, 1973; 1982; Burt, 1992). Haythronthwaite (2002), highlighted the strength of online communication through online network ties that can connect communicators. She draws attention to communication technologies and the positive outcomes of online weak ties in online social networks for developing and maintaining the strength of interpersonal ties. Nevertheless, she mentions that this kind of connection is fragile. In the same vein, Hampton (2003), maintains that CMC are useful in fostering weak ties to support and maintain social networks. Online networking can be helpful in bridging weak ties and bonding social capital aimed at expanding social interactions among cooperating group members with common interests and values. One primary advantage of online communication through weak ties is bridging and providing access to sources of information necessary for social embeddedness. In this regard, social capital can be described as a platform of social embeddedness in a social structure. According to the above definition, social capital contains social embeddedness that allows people to have access to social resources. The theories mentioned above confirm that virtual environment is known as a joint activity that allows for virtual interaction. Hence, OVGs are an increasingly important area of communication for children, therefore it is important to explore them with a focus on migrant children. Therefore, the

present study is aimed at examining whether online communication can help migrant children have access to social capital as a platform for social embeddedness that allows to improved social connections and bridging between online weak ties and offline interactions, and also bonding social capital to promote sharing activities and maintaining social relationship and social embeddedness. The transference from online to offline settings through the modality switching usually leads to the growth of online weak ties via a single medium. Thus, modality switching likely lead to strong social interactions and results in social support. However, it is necessary to examine the two aspects of interaction through media multiplicity: both risks and opportunities for interpersonal communication. These studies together indicate that through the CMC, individuals are able to build and maintain interpersonal relationships. Nevertheless, most of the studies on this topic have not explored the influence of the CMC on the integration and social embeddedness of online users together with its benefits through allowing for communication via modality switching and shifting from online to offline communication that can build strong relationships. Many OVGs allow the players to be social and to communicate and cooperate with the other players. The present study considers the implications of OVGs for migrant children in terms of getting social support from online players and later meet in the offline setting.

One of the critical aspects of social embeddedness is motivation. Collins and Freeman (2013) point out that gamers do not think about the social features of OVGs, whereas other researchers highlight the role of social motivation in virtual worlds. Social motivation plays a significant role in the social aspect of online gaming, and also have a substantial impact on integration between players. They argue that more research studies should be conducted on the differentiating aspects of gamers' motivation that is provided through OVGs (Shen & Williams, 2011). Detailed examination of gamers' motivation by Williams et al. (2008) and Shen and Williams (2011) indicated that each

player has their own experiences in the same games. They argued that different players have different motivations and activities in online games. In addition, the time-consuming characteristic of online settings impacts the development of online interaction and transmission of communication from online to offline setting. In line with the above studies, the present study is aimed at providing a valuable insight into online communication and motivation resulting in social embeddedness and bonding among online users to meet in offline setting. Some of the previous studies had a limitation in terms of not explicitly examining online users' interactions in offline settings that play an important role in fostering the social embeddedness of online players.

A small amount of research has examined the transference of social interactions among OVG players to offline settings and everyday life's social embeddedness (Shen & Williams, 2011; Williams et al., 2006). Another limitation is that if online video gamers play alone, the online game will not lead to the positive social outcomes. Thus, online players should play within groups to benefit from the social outcomes of gaming (Williams & Shen, 2011). In addition, most of the studies have only focused on one specific OVG, and have not considered OVGs as a phenomenon (Shen & Williams, 2011; Williams et al., 2006). At last but not least, most studies have only pointed out that OVGs support online weak ties, and have neglected to consider the possibility of bridging online weak ties, bonding offline setting, and social embeddedness (Ducheneaut et al., 2006).

2.4 Literature reviews

The researcher reviews literatures that help in filling the gap in the current study on communication context and migrant children, OVGs, modality switching between online and offline

communication, and social embeddedness. Here the literature on this topic is reviewed to show the importance of the study objective in relation to the theories described.

2.4.1 Migrant children

In their study on migrant children, Sim and Fox (2015) identified many barriers that children encounter when moving to a new country which can influence their psychological well-being, and that the process of settlement in a new country can lead to anxiety. Several attempts have been made to show the challenges migrant children have to cope with, such as disruption in interaction with old friends, experience of segregation at school, lack of information, low engagement in leisure activities, and language barriers. There are also other challenges that migrant children may face, such as losing connection with friends, and experience of segregation and hostility in a new educational environment (Devine, 2009; Haikkola, 2011). There is an increasing number of children who migrate with their families. Migration has always received a considerable attention from a wide range of researchers. Migration can result in feeling of loss, because it involves leaving part of the past behind, which can cause many new challenges for the migrant people. According to Sim and Fox (2015), migrant children are faced with such challenges as isolation, anxiety, and depression, because they need to adjust to a new environment. These researchers focused on the barriers migrant children may face, and believed that migrant children tend to be marginalised. Migration can decrease children's ability to blend in the society, and creates many challenges for them in their efforts to engage in leisure activities in everyday life. Many researchers have applied the social capital theory to migration studies to identify migrants' social networks before and after moving to another country. Social capital, in fact, considers individuals' access to resources through social interaction. These connections have key role in migrants' ability to access resources

in everyday life. The present study is focused on migrant children who play OVGs as an everyday leisure activity. Online players communicate with other players through OVGs, and this can positively influence their social relationships in daily life. The present study attempts to understand the impact of playing OVGs on migrant children, to examine the use of modality switching from online to offline communication for migrant children in blending with the host community children, and to examine whether they can be embedded within the new social environment. Despite all previous efforts, there is still a need to examine the role of strengthening online weak ties in improving the social interactions of online players, and to further explore whether these ties can bridge and bond new social interactions to enable players to find others with similar interests through communication via OVGs.

2.4.2 Online Video Games (OVGs)

In recent years, there has been a growing number of studies focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of playing OVGs and the social outcomes of video games. The CMC has created a space for users to meet and interact with each other. Such features as anonymity encourage online gamers to interact with other online players (Lenhart et al., 2009). In addition, the CMC provides opportunities for social interaction for those populations who experience problems in social interaction, such as migrant children. On the other hand, some researchers believe that interaction via OVGs can be harmful to children. These researchers have concentrated on the disadvantages of online ties, such as isolation and addiction to OVGs (Williams, 2006, 2011; Desjarlais & Willoughby, 2010; Kowert & Oldmeadow, 2013; Putnam, 2001; Griffith & Hunt, 1998; Domahidi & Quandt, 2014).

According to Sproull and Kiesler (1991), people use Internet for interpersonal communication more than any other purposes; however, this does not imply that online interaction is the same as real life social interaction. They argued that joining a particular online interactive platform, such as multiplayer OVGs, seem to have a crucial part in the growth of pathological internet. OVGs have become an issue of great concern over the past few years. The literature on the negative aspects of OVGs has highlighted several harmful outcomes of video games for players, including aggression, addiction, anxiety, and deterioration. Furthermore, OVGs can have a negative impact on interpersonal connections, school performance, isolation, and can lead to such problems as escape from real life, child violence, and cybercrime (Griffiths et al., 2003; Griffiths, 2000). Domahidi and Quandt (2014), showed that playing online games can have a negative impact on gamers' leisure activities, because they may not see other alternatives to replace with playing online games. Playing OVGs can also negatively impact the everyday life of players, including their social relationships. The researchers also believe that OVGs can be harmful due to gamer's loss of bonding with their social capital. Online gamers may excessively focus on online communication and interaction; therefore, it might negatively influence their social well-being (Griffiths et al., 2003).

In the study on multiplayer OVGs, Ducheneaut et al. (2006) point out that the game missions might not be played in a group, but instead, players may rely on other gamers to watch their performance and facilitate the game plan if necessary. Online gamers do not interact with each other while being surrounded by other online players, and the sense of social interaction through the game may not be necessarily important to them. Kraut and landmark (1998), considered online interaction as consisting of online weak ties, and argued that online gamers are not embedded in the social circles to allow for receiving social support. The difference between offline and online ties in

relationship values has led to an excessive concentration on the disadvantage of playing OVGs related to online weak ties, such as social isolation and addiction (Griffiths & Hunt, 1998).

In contrary, there are studies that focus on the positive aspects of OVGs, and much remains to be learned about the context of OVGs in terms of communication, interpersonal relationships, and social consequences.

According to Lenhart et al. (2007), online gaming is a mass phenomenon that has spread into the lives of many children around the world, and is part of many children's social activities in everyday life. OVGs lead to various sets of social experiences for gamers.

Demir and Weitekamp (2007) described the positive impact of playing OVGs on gamers, and its potential relationship with social engagement. When playing OVGs, as a certain task, gamers need to support other players and be committed to cooperation, communication, and competition. They mention that playing OVGs is a cooperative activity that can increase their number of friends. Additionally, Internet is a source of social information through which people can broaden their personal attachments. Through social networks, people interact with each other, and this provides them with opportunities to communicate with other online gamers. Online interaction is also advantageous introverts as they can adapt into the new environment without the pressure of face-to-face interaction. Online settings provide friendship and communication, therefore improving users' psychological well-being, and allowing for interaction and receiving social support (Demir & Weitekamp, 2007; Fischer, 1982; Smith & Mackie, 2007; Williams et al., 2011).

A considerable amount of the literature has developed around the theme of OVGs, indicating that playing online games can enhance socialisation, interaction, and communication with a significant link to the importance of online weak ties for forming social capital and social embeddedness. According to Baker (1990), through playing OVGs, individuals or groups with shared values and

common understanding, behaviours, and attitudes can build interpersonal trust, therefore building strong bonds with other players. Online gaming as a source of social capital includes online social ties that positively influence gamers' ability to interact through team working and collaboration with other gamers. Williams and Shen (2011), argued that OVGs enhance gamers' social skills as a powerful platform supporting communication and cooperation. Online players should have social motivation in order to benefit from the social aspects of the games, even if gamers have different levels of motivation.

Walther (1992) showed that online communication has the same social role as face-to-face and nonverbal communication. However, the quality of online communication develops over time, depending on players' level of intimacy and friendship (Chan & Cheng, 2004).

Williams and Shen (2011), maintain that gamers transform social relationships from online to offline settings and vice versa, and that this transformation helps gamers receive social support. OVGs play a significant role in children's sociability. Furthermore, connections via OVGs help bridging weak ties and bonding social capital by modality switching from online to offline settings that have potential to bring online weak ties to the real life and help online gamers embedded within social networks and the real social capital.

This study indicated that gamers who developed social capital via OVGs tended to bridge between online and offline weak ties and develop face to face interaction with other gamers in offline settings which have a significant role in gamers' social embeddedness (Putnam, 2001; Barrera, 1986). In this regard, the related literature reviewed in the present study was presented in a figure to help the readers clearly understand and access different aspects of this thesis. The figure presents the relationship between the concepts used in this study to answer the research questions. The relationship between concepts is shown by straight lines connecting the concepts.

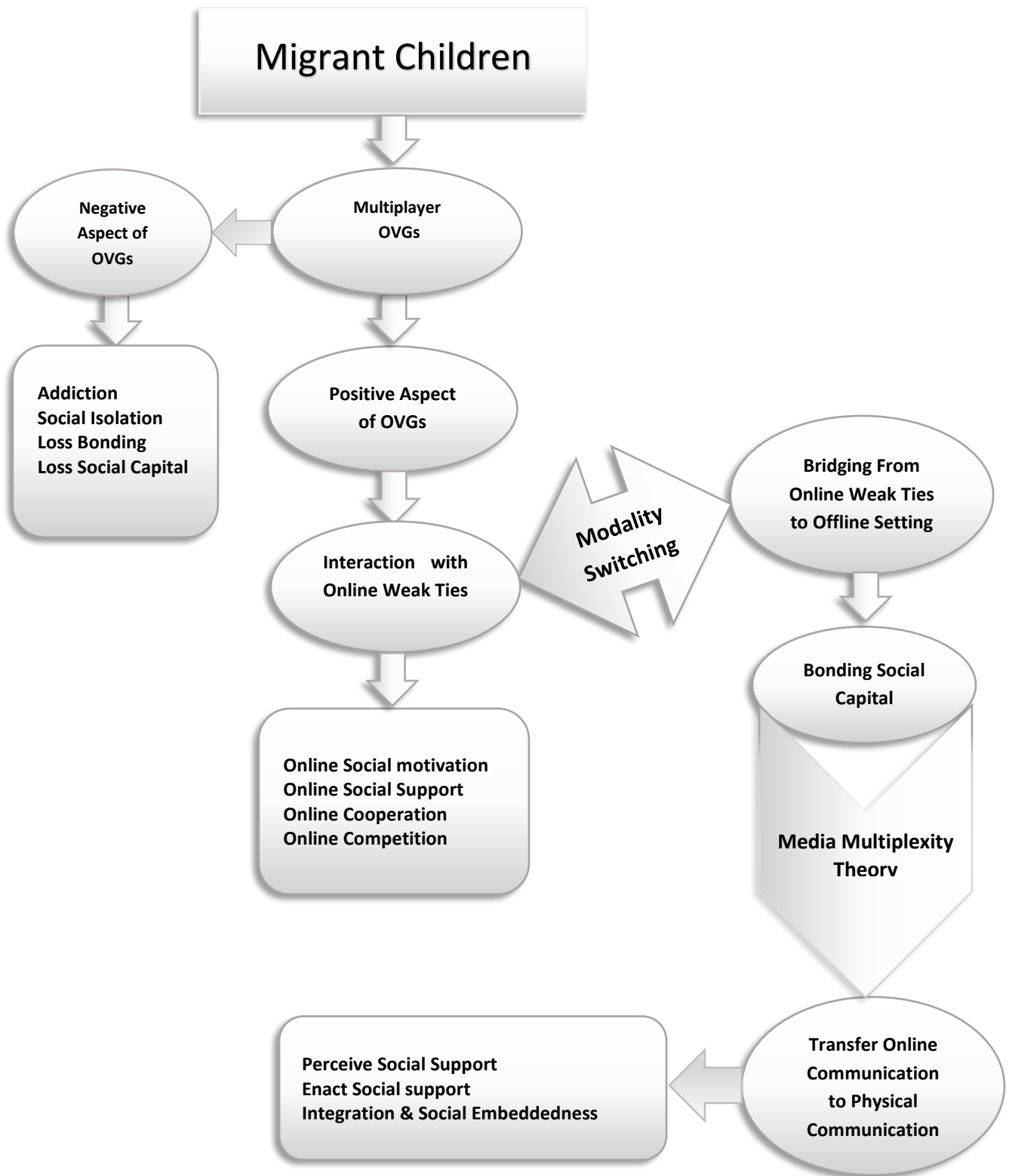


Figure 2.1
Concept Map

2.5 Summary

Migrant children are faced with various challenges to cope with a new environment. The main challenges migrant children face include segregation, lack of social interactions, and loss of sense of belonging (Fox & Sim, 2015). They have lost their old relationships and need to find new social connections and communication channels to be able to embedded within the social networks (Haikkola, 2011; Reynolda, 2007). The present study attempts to examine how playing OVGs can help migrant children bridge between online weak ties and offline settings by modality switching to bond and embeddedness in a new social network within the host community children. All the theories reviewed recognised social capital as containing actions and structures, such as social embeddedness and opportunities to access source of information. Online gaming is a favourite leisure activity among children that can facilitate social interaction among players (Domahidi et al., 2013). In addition, communication via OVGs and the transformation of the online to offline communication contribute to the development of interaction with the host community children. In the next chapter, the research design, the study population and the research methodology are described.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

The present study is focused on bridging and bonding new social networks in the context of modality switching between online and offline communication through playing OVGs in migrant children. Previous studies have usually used a qualitative method for communication studies on children. Interviews usually provide details on human interaction in a social situation (Treadwell, 2017). This research is aimed at examining migrant children, modality switching, communication, integration and, social embeddedness. A qualitative method was used to interview the participants to understand their opinions, experiences, and the processes to receive the details. An exploratory qualitative method was used that enables the researcher to gain a comprehensive idea of participants' opinions and what should be studied in the next research.

3.1 Semi-structure interviews

According to Grant et al. (2012), there are three kinds of interviews: Structured interviews, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews. Here the three kinds of interviews are briefly described. Structured interview is a set of standard questions asking about a specific subject in a precise structure. Unstructured interviews are used when the researcher does not have specific strategies or restrictions regarding the questions, and enquires a few broad questions to connect with the interviewees in an informal way, allowing them to answer the open-ended questions freely to explore in-depth information.

Semi-structured interviewing is the method in which the researcher asks a set of questions and the interviewees answer with their own words. This method is appropriate when the sample give short responses, and the researcher can continue by posing extra questions.

In the present study, semi-structure interviews were used in work with children. Using semi-structured interviews, the researcher communicate with the children through face-to-face conversations. In addition, open-ended interview questions were used to collect in-depth data and to allow the target group to provide their insight in a natural setting (Grant et al., 2012). It helps researchers to gain a better understanding of individual characteristics and situational influences. Interview is an appropriate method when the researcher wants to collect in-depth information about participants' opinions, feelings, and experiences. Personal, face-to-face connection in interview provides some cues about the feelings the question creates in the participant. In addition, face-to-face interviews are appropriate when the target population are children. It is easier to communicate with children through face-to-face conversation as compared to other methods, such as questionnaires, writing, or phone calls. With interview, not only the respondents answer the questions, but also transfer such feelings as consent hedonism and their express emotions, personality characteristics, and opinions.

In interview, participants are able to tell the interviewer if the questions were not clear to them (Treadwell, 2017). Likewise, semi-structured interviews can be useful in gaining a thorough understanding of social embeddedness of migrant children into the host community children. It enables the researcher to examine the migrant children's opinions, thoughts, motivations, and feelings about their embeddedness into the host community children through playing OVGs.

3.2 Validity and reliability

Lobe et al. (2008) maintain that in research on children and the CMC, the validity and reliability of the data should be considered. In this study, the researcher tries to check and double check to detect misunderstandings, and to search for inconsistency in children's explanations, and provide

appropriate interpretations. This process helps the researcher to avoid any ambiguity and ambivalences.

A pilot study was conducted using the questions to assess reliability of the questions, to check if any of the questions were either hard to understand or too complicated, to make sure that all the respondents understood the questions and had the proper knowledge to answer them, and to consider asking questions with less details or drop uncertain questions. It is important to minimize judgement and only focus on the accuracy of answers. To make sure about validity, efforts were made to rephrase questions or ask multiple questions in different forms to make sure that the questions had the same meaning for all participants (Lobe et al., 2008)

3.3 Research design

The qualitative method is used in this study which is strongly related to the literature. Generally, this method allows seeking a new realm and new definitions (Treadwell, 2017). In this study, the researcher provides an in-depth understanding of migrant children's communication via OVGs concerning social embeddedness.

The interview started with asking the migrant children about their general perception of online games, their interaction with the host community children, and their communications both online and offline. It was important to ask their opinion on how online games had helped them bridge the communication gap between themselves and the host community children.

The researcher wanted to find out if interactions had transferred from online to offline settings, bringing about social support for the children. Answering this question helps us understand the potential of online interactions using OVGs for bridging weak ties and bonding social capital. It was also necessary to find out if the number of online players the child communicated with

determined the number of offline interactions. These examinations allowed the researcher to estimate whether modality switching supported participants' perception of online to offline communication transition.

Before starting the investigation, the researcher had to be well-prepared for what to focus on and how to conduct the research. The research started with a review of the related literature and theories in different areas. The interview questions comprise three main parts, including communication via the OVGs, modality switching between online weak ties and offline connections, and social embeddedness.

In autumn 2017, the questions were tested on five migrant children by conducting in-depth interviews and paying attention to the explanations and cues provided by the respondents. The questions were modified after the pre-interviews. The interview process began on March, 10th and finished on April, 15th.

The interviews were started with questions requiring short answers and continued to those requiring some sort of story and long explanation. Each respondent was interviewed individually with the presence of one of their parents.

The interviews were audiotaped using a sound recorder application on iPhone called iTalk. The application worked perfectly, the recording quality was excellent, and the answers were all recorded and transcribed. Figure 3.1 displays the stages of the study.

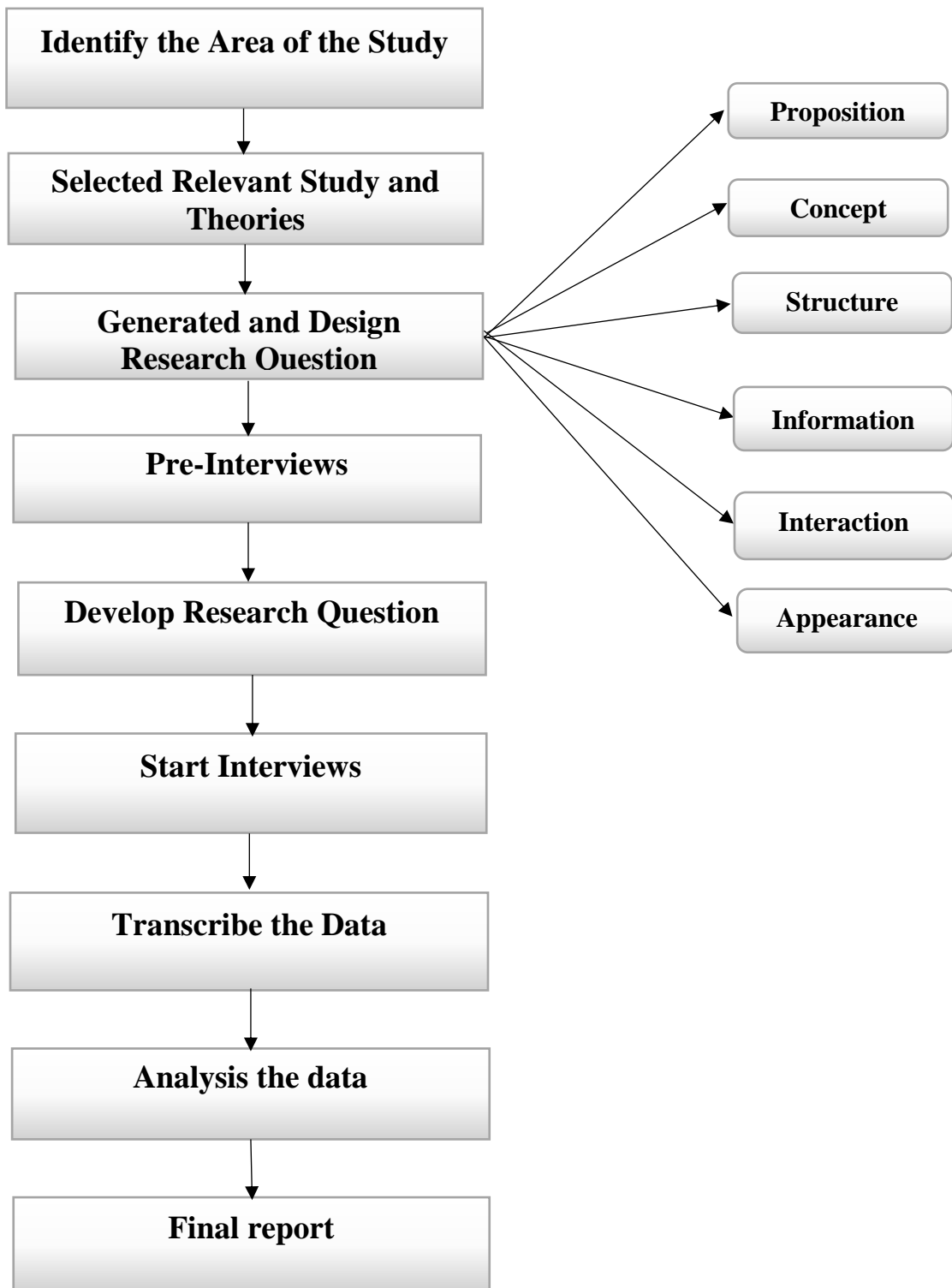


Figure 3.1
Research Design

3.4 Participants and ethical consideration

The data were gathered from ten children living in Gothenburg, a city in Sweden. All of the participants were aged 12-14 years old, and had newly arrived in Sweden (on average, six months up to three years). All participants were boys with different nationalities: One from Iran, two from South Korea, one from Spain, three from China, two from Japan, and one from Egypt.

The participants were engaged in playing OVGs, and usually played games, like “Playerunknown's BattleGrounds”, “Overwatch”, “Counter-Strike - Global Offensive”, “Minecraft”, “League of Legends”, “Fortnite” and “Team Fortress 2”. Online communicators interact through a program called Discord, which is both a program and an online website. Discord is a free program that allows for voice and video calls and text chats in the game's environment or even outside of the game with a limitation of 120 minutes per day.

The researcher was committed to follow specific instruction in conducting the study, including seeking the informed consent of the parents of children who involved in the study. It was essential to be very careful when approaching the parents and children and to ask appropriate questions to avoid misinterpretations. The interview process began in March, and participants were interviewed individually with the presence of one of their parents. I met one child with one of his parents at a time in a friendly atmosphere. Before conduction the interview, it was clearly explained to both parents and participants that their identity remained completely anonymous. Participants were given numbers from one to ten instead of their real names to keep their anonymity, and all personal information were removed from the results. The only information that keep is their nationality.. The study objectives were also explained briefly to the participants.

Before asking the main question, I introduced myself to the child and his parent and told them a short story about who I was and what I was going to do. I then continued with a friendly

conversation about OVGs, and tried to use my knowledge about the games to ask them about their favourite OVG in order to strengthen our interpersonal connection before moving to the main questions. I also inquired what game console (PlayStation, X-BOX, Nintendo, or computer) they preferred to use and why? And also asked about how much time they spend on the game every day?

The interviews were conducted in periods of times that were convenient for both parents and children. It was researcher's obligation to look out for cues about attention span, distress, and willingness to participate. Children are considered to be vulnerable, therefore it is the researcher's duty to be careful about abnormalities. Participants were free to withdraw from the interview session at any point if they felt uncomfortable. The interview questions were the main instruments for collecting data in this study.

3.5 Research procedure

The collected data were classified to examine the participants' experiences and awareness of integration with the host community children. The recorder interviews were transcribed. Then, the theory was used to analyse the data and browse through the transcripts. Notes were made from the first impressions and were read again line by line. Then, a codebook was developed, and all the data were tagged to all primary codes, and then the sub-themes were searched based on identities, names, categories and descriptions. In the next step, related codes were added to each other and relevant words and sentences were labelled based on actions, activities, and concepts. Then, the actual word codes and the transcribed stories, actions, and experiences were utilized. Finally, the researcher focused on the coding process to compare the primary codes between texts, and looked for similarities, differences, and convergence.

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS

Playing OVGs allows the player to interact with other players while being able to select who they desire to play. Squire (2006) points out that, the most powerful form of social learning takes place in multiplayer OVGs, where players communicate with thousands of other online video gamers in the online setting. The games provides a platform that encourages interaction and building relationships among the players.

The purpose of the present study was to explore the impact of playing OVGs on bridging and bonding to a new social network by communication modality between online and offline settings among migrant children. The study examined if migrant children who played OVGs were able to develop relationship with the host community children, both online and offline, and transfer their online interactions into the daily life to bond with the host community children.

In this study, playing OVGs is an everyday life activity for migrant children that gives them pleasure and happiness. The participants are ten migrant children who living in Gothenburg, Sweden. The qualitative method was used to collect data from the participants. Moreover, a media multiplicity model was used to understand the impact of modality switching via OVGs on migrant children, and to find out whether they were using communication modality switching to bond social network. Each of the children was interviewed individually, and all the interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The first set of questions were aimed at exploring both online and offline communication experiences via OVGs and that number of players that the child communicated with. Then, the participants were asked if they were familiar with those who played with. Then they were asked if

they had met any online players physically. The rest of the questions were open-ended ones requiring more detailed answers, regarding such areas as participants’ motivation to shift from online to face-to-face interaction, and the impact of modality switching on players’ social embeddedness.

4.1 Communication via OVGs

The first questions asked the participants about their general perception of online communication with other players. They communicated through OVGs with both familiar and unfamiliar OVG players. The overall response to the first question was positive. They talked with almost every random online player when playing games in the virtual environment.

The participants spent about 120 to 180 every day to play OVGs. They spent more time playing OVGs during weekends and holidays as long as they stayed at home and were free. They stated that even when they did not play, they were online most of the time participating in the Discord chatrooms, sending and receiving messages and exchanging information with other game players to update their knowledge on the game plans. Table 4.1 presents the number of participants, their nationalities, and the amount of time they spent on OVGs both in weekdays and weekends.

Table 4.1
Number of participants, nationalities and the time spent on playing OVGs

Migrant children	Nationality	Time spent on playing OVGs	
		Weekdays	Weekends
1	Japan	2-3 hours	More than 5-6 hours
2	South Korea	2-2.30 hours	Around 5 hours

3	Egypt	2-3 hours	All of my free time
4	Spain	About 3 hours	3-6 hours
5	China	Only 2-2.30 hours	As much as I am free
6	South Korea	Only 2-3 hours	I play till I get bored
7	Japan	Around 2 hours	Around 5-6 hours
8	China	Around 2-2.30 hours	At least 5-6 hours
9	Iran	2-3 hours	Around 5-6 hours
10	China	Exactly 2 hours	All of my free time

The participants' responses revealed that regarding to the times that kids are allocated for the online games, this phenomenon can play an important role in their daily lives and should be considered as serious leisure. The OVGs allow the players to create and join social groups that called guilds. These actions took on missions such as competition and cooperated in groups. That optimise success by strategising based on each members' skills set that indicated they needed to collaborate in OVG's context (Ratan et al., 2010; Coleman & Dyer-Witthford, 2007; Steinkuehler and Williams, 2006, Zhong, 2011). Table 4.2 illustrates the main reasons that the participants are tented to communicate via online games with everyone.

Table 4.2
Communication when playing OVGs

Migrant children	Communication and socialisation when playing OVGs
1	It is not just playing alone ... when you are together, you talk ... even chatting outside the games with phone and other applications

2	I have to communicate ... I need to share information with others in my team
3	... I communicate to help other players and to get help... I voice chat with all the clan members
4	most of the time ... voice calls and chat equally ...
5	... play and talk ... I need to talk to others and ask them... talking is a vital aspect of being part of online game community ... less chat, less talk means less interaction ...
6	... I talk to share information ...
7	... with voice, text messages, emoji ... I need to say do up and down ... I need real communication for actual games ...
8	... not just talking, but often texting and talking ...
9	... I play and talk to share information on the next action and may plan to get more stuff ... or saying "I flush them ... wait for seconds ... then come ..."
10	... Do you want to work and collect things? ... you need to talkkkk ...

According to the majority of interviewees, the key point in communication during playing OVGs is the exchange of information and supporting each other in the team play. The migrant children talked to each other both implicitly and explicitly when playing OVGs, and exchanged information by audio calls and text messages.

4.2 Communication via OVGs with both familiar people and strangers

In response to the second question, a significant result appears. Table 4.3 shows that the majority of the migrant children communicated with both familiar people and strangers during when playing OVGs.

Table 4.3
Number of people whom the migrant children communicated with

Migrant Children	Number
Migrant children who communicated with familiar people in OVGs	10 out of 10
Migrant children who communicate with strangers in OVGs	9 out of 10

The table shows that 9 out of 10 respondents have communicated with everyone. Only the participant number five did not talk with strangers in the online setting. He expressed his feelings on this issue, and said “I can’t trust everyone ...” He continued that “When I play with exotic players, I only use emotes to communicate, like good job!, thank you, say hi, etc.” (See table 4.4). He explained how he limited communication with strangers. This did not mean that he did not communicate or play with strangers, but he tried to limit his communication with those he did not know. Table 4.4 presents all the children’s statements on whom they had communicated with during online gaming.

Table 4.4
Those whom the migrant children communicated with via OVGs

Migrant children	Those whom the migrant children communicated with via OVGs
1	I communicate with an uncountable number of people in total, both known and unknown ..., but I prefer to play with whom I know
2	...with many people in the games, both familiar and strangers ... I look for people that I know them
3	... both but many of them are not my friends, I just play to collect stuff or take their things ...

4	... both familiar and strangers players ... I play with strangers ... more competition and strategy
5	I do not choose people randomly ... I have to know them before entering their team or offering to play with them ... but if I play with exotics I only use emotes like a good job!, thank you and say hi, etc. ... to limit voice chat with strangers ... without limitation in online interactions ... I play in the team cause I know other game players in the team, and when I come back tomorrow I will play with them again if I see them
6	...with both, I build community and I can manage whom I want to talk and bond to
7	...voice call and chatting with clan members reduces the chance of encountering online abuse... I communicate with both familiar people and strangers
8	...sometimes I have to teach and cheer other players whom I don't know to be able to join their team and play with them... players communicate with other players, no matter who they are ...
9	...both of them, I like full communication in all multiplayer video games ... much more satisfies me, and without communication, I feel lonely and hollow
10	...both familiar players and strangers ... there are a lot of people in OVGs, and I communicate with them, but my first choice are my friends whom I already know

According to the results, 9 out of 10 interviewees met new people in the online setting, and communicated with both familiar people and strangers when playing OVGs. The participant number 5 preferred to play with those whom he knew in the online setting for the longest time or those whom he had already met face-to-face. The answers indicated that most of the interviewees

talked with everyone both their online friends and those whom they had already met in the offline settings. Interestingly, they talked with everyone, and had conversation with those whom they knew and also the strangers. Another finding from the participants' answers was that they communicated with other players to win the game, to compete with other players, or to enjoy their free time. One of the remarkable points that participants stated was that they preferred to play with those whom they were already familiar with, because they could easily trust them as their teammates during the games. They stated that they engaged in playing OVGs to communicate and integrate with other team members. They were motivated to communicate with other players to exchange information, experience collaboration and competition, and try to win the game. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 present participant's statements indicating their motivation to communicate via OVGs.

4.3 Number of people the migrant children communicated with in online and offline settings

The participants stated that they preferred to communicate with those online gamers whom they had already met in offline settings. The participants classified their team members into three groups: (1) those who were their friends, and had already met them face-to-face, (2) online friends that the participants knew them in the online game context for some time, but had never met them face-to-face, and (3) random players. Table 4.5 shows the categories of people the participants played them.

Table 4.5
Categories of online players

Categories of online players	Number
Known both virtually and physically and considered as friends	10-15
Known from virtual environment, migrant children trust them, but they have never met	A few

Random players playing with migrant children in the game	A lot of players
----------------------------------------------------------	------------------

The participants stated that the average number of people they knew both in online and offline settings was 10-15. The migrant children prefer to play with those online gamers whom they have already met physically, and also those whom they call online friends who have been their teammates for quite some time, but have never met them face-to-face. From this finding, it appears that the participants play with their online friends who have been members of the same team (guild) over a period of time. The interviewees acknowledged that online game players interact with a lot of people whom they are not familiar with, whom they have only met in online settings. Here a report from one of the study participants is provided: “I have played with online friends over the years, but, none has been long term...” this report indicates that online games do not always guarantee long-term friendships for the players.

The result has presented the participants prefer to collaborate and communicate with online players whom they know in offline settings or those whom they know for a long time, even if they have never met them in offline setting. For example, participant number 9 said, “I am part of some online games’ communities with tens of thousands members... I share specific or broad interests with them, but, I only meet those I know them in real life like school friends”. Participant number 7 said, “I play with my friends from school, about 10-15 players”. Participant number 3 said, “... a lot of players around and only meet a few of them ... online communities that became friends in real life ... often only play with them”. Further, participant number 10 said, “... for me unknown players most of the time it’s a one-off thing, and I usually do not talk with them again”. Closer inspection of the outcomes indicates that migrant children are able to transfer their communication

via online games to offline settings. The majority of the respondents prefer to play with those whom they have already met face-to-face and know them outside the online setting.

4.4 The Social outcomes of OVGs

A striking result emerging from the data indicates that social motivations play an essential role in OVGs. The fundamental motive behind paying attention to OVGs as stated by the migrant children was to seek social communication and interpersonal relationships. The participants stated that interaction with other people is a strong motivation for them to play online. When asked about how playing online games helped them feel closer to the host community children, most of the participants referred to a sense of belonging. For instance, participant number 2 expressed his feelings as follows: “being as a member of the games guild and talking to friends help me to feel I belong to the group”. They used such terms as “play together”, “help each other” and “trust”. These terms indicated that the online communications that are transferred to face-to-face interactions provide the opportunity for migrant children to receive more social support from the host community children. They play together in the online setting and also meet each other in the offline setting, something that gives them a sense of belonging to the host community children. Table 4.6 presents an overview of social motivations behind playing OVGs and social outcomes of OVGs for the participants, influencing their social embeddedness.

Table 4.6
Social outcomes of playing OVGs, and the impact of playing OVGs on social embeddedness

Migrant children	Social outcomes of playing OVGs for migrant children
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1	We always meet and talk ... in the online setting, we depend on each other's efforts, and need to exchange information to help each other ... those whom I know in real life ... We talk when we meet ...
2	We play in teams and help each other ... We join teams to win ... We trust each other ... We continue our interactions outside the game
3	Both competition and wining matter We try to help and win ... We provide advice and share information ... We continue our conversation later
4	Full of fun ... I feel I have place inside groups ... Wining is dependent on team members helping each other... We talk outside the game and use other social channels to connect
5	We share information ... help each other to win Some are professional players, and I need their help ... We continue our offline interaction
6	We need to help and support each other to win ... Our conversations on what happens in the game will transfer to offline settings ...
7	Even competition ... full of joy ... Our conversations continue outside the game setting, and we use other social channels to connect
8	We cooperate in teams to win ... Offline communication allows me to keep online interactions
9	We talk during team play, and help friends to win ... We like to experience these connections again in the offline setting
10	Play together for a common goal ... share information to win Carry the information to offline settings

4.5 Modality switching

A positive connection was found regarding the transference of online communication to offline settings. For instance, participant number 1 said “multiplayer online games enable me to find something to talk about when I meet them face-to-face”; participant number 2 said “help and team play”; participant number 6 said “I find people who are like me, and get support,” and participant number 10 said “...we will share information next time ... when we are together”. These answers indicated the high possibility of transference of online communications to offline settings with the host community children.

Playing OVGs created an opportunity for migrant children to communicate and connect with those with whom they had shared interests. It also affected the other aspects of their social life, such as trust. Trusting each other allowed the migrant children to feel close to the host community children. The more people communicate with those with common interests, the higher motivation they feel to work on their relationships and social embeddedness. The study results indicated that if migrant children can trust other game players (their guild members) when playing online, this sense of trust can be transferred to offline settings, leading to strong interpersonal ties between migrant children and the host community children. The children shared personal experiences with their team members and communicated with them about game strategies outside the OVG setting, and this positively influenced different aspects of their social life. The results showed that the migrant children were able to make stronger ties outside the game setting, through transferring the online weak ties to the offline setting. The participants communicated with other game players about game plans and strategies, and this influenced their interactions with those they met offline in everyday life. Communication modality helped the players explain their plans during the games, and show their intention to communicate and share information with both their team members and

their opponents outside of the online setting. For example, participant number 3 said, "...we talk to each other in our free times when we are together ..." and participant number 5 said "I talk with my friends about game rules and my rules, skills ... I later meet them in the game and show my action". These statements show that there is a high possibility of experiencing interpersonal trust and cooperation when online players meet each other physically. Transference of communication and switching from one modality (online) to another one (offline) helped the migrant children interact with the host community children. The study results indicate that migrant children need motivation and trust to be able to build social relationships.

When online gamers meet other players in the real world, they can communicate with their friends and also friends of friends whom they know from the online setting, and can share the game information with them. The data confirmed that playing online games allowed the participants to connect to the host community children, and possibly make strong ties with them. The participants explained how online communication improved their everyday life relationships, but not with everyone. Although multiplayer online games present various opportunities for gamers to interact with other players, a missing social element like face-to-face meeting indicates that online gaming do not always guarantee long-term friendships. Table 4.7 shows the migrant children' statements.

Table 4.7
Modality switching and developing relationships

Migrant children	Modality switching and developing relationships
1	I connect to all those whom I know from the online setting, but I am very close to one or two of them... I mean sharing information together and making strong relationships

2	We communicate together... we meet in school and talk to all Online gamers... I feel close to many of them
3	It is good to talk & communicate about a common interest, but some players cheat in online games... but other are more trustworthy compared to dishonest ones
4	We communicate and exchange information with each other, and I know many of the online gamers from school...
5	There are other people that I know both online and offline, and we talk about the game, but I am not really close to all of them...
6	I know most of them... We talk... and they sometimes cheat on the games
7	Some of my friends in the digital setting are quite different...They seem cute in the offline setting, but creepy and cunning when playing online games
8	We are comminute when we are together, but it is just talking
9	Not all online players that I meet face-to-face are my true friends
10	I talk with all of them ... about closeness! Only with a few of them

According to the study results, modality switching from online to offline setting can grow social embeddedness to bridging online weak ties and bonding social network. Furthermore, there is a possibility that migrant children use online weak ties in everyday life interactions with other players from the host community whom they have met in the offline setting, however, the participants stated that “not everyone”. On the other hand, the study results suggested that being in a social capital does not necessarily lead to social bonding. It has been shown that offline

conversations among gamers do not always lead to close relationships, however, they can have a positive impact on gamers' interactions and increase the chance of social embeddedness. Moreover, migrant children are at the bridging level in their communications both virtually and physically. For example, participant number 8 said, "...sometimes I am just waiting for one of my friends to join but no one comes around, but this doesn't matter, we talk about that later...". The participants' report that they had 10-15 friends in the offline setting indicated that playing OVGs had increased the chance of social embeddedness for them (See table 4.5).

It appears from the results that, through playing OVGs, migrant children can communicate with both familiar people and strangers, but they only interact with those whom they know in offline setting. Nevertheless, this does not imply that they communicate with everyone they meet face-to-face. The online gamers transformed their conversations from online to the offline settings, and were motivated to extend their social interactions to more friends and friends of friends. However, in transferring online interaction to offline settings, they preferred to have close relationships with those of the same age range and social status. They showed that they had control over their close relationships.

The communication modality increases the possibility of transferring online interactions to the offline setting which has a positive impact on migrant children's social embeddedness. However no increase was noticed in the number of intimate friends with improved interaction. From this data, it appeared that playing OVGs improved offline connections between the participants and their friends from the host community and also their friends of friends when talking in a group in an offline setting. In addition, the results showed how the migrant children bridged between online weak ties and offline ties. Since they like to play and compete with other online players to show their capabilities in the game, their motivation to make close relationships can be reduced.

These results reveal that the length of online communication with offline friends does not impact the type of relationships for migrant children. The important effects was on the strength of their relationships and the length of their offline communication that helped them bond social capital.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

The present thesis was aimed at discovering the impact of playing OVGs on migrant children's social embeddedness with the host community children. The result on the use of modality switching between online and offline settings has not previously described in the studies on migrant online gamers. Modality switching can improve online weak ties and transfer them to offline settings. The transference of online weak ties to the offline setting leads to stronger interpersonal ties that have positive implications for psychological well-being (Haythronthwaite, 1996; William, 2006). In this way, individuals can receive support both emotionally and socially. The present study attempted to examine the development of social interactions via playing OVGs in migrant children. It was also aimed at exploring the transference of online weak ties to offline settings to find out whether they can lead to bridging and bonding social capital using communication through modality switching between online and offline setting.

The results indicated that playing OVGs was everyday leisure activity for the participants. They spent a lot of time playing OVGs, and even when they were not in the game setting, they communicated with other online players via Discords to share information. All the participants confirmed that they interacted through online weak ties during the games either with those whom they already knew or with strangers. The study results present three points to answer the research questions.

5.1 Migrant children's social capital

The results confirm that playing OVGs provides an opportunity for migrant children to connect to the social capital. It is important to note that migrant gamers should integrate with other online

gamers in groups to be able to show their capabilities, compete, and win. The theory of social capital emphasizes on the important role of such factors as sources of information, teamwork, interaction, reciprocal activities, and trust. In this regard, the results indicated that when playing OVGs, the participants preferred to interact with those online players through online weak ties whom they were likely to meet in offline settings. The transformation of online weak ties to face-to-face interactions provides an opportunity for migrant children for bridging and bonding social capital. The interpersonal connections established through playing OVGs and then transferred to the offline setting, were based on trust that between migrant children and the host community children (Ratan et al., 2010; Coleman & Dyer-Witheford, 2007; Williams, 2006). The face-to-face communication is a source of information for migrant children. Online information channels, such as voice calls and text messaging via Discord decreases uncertainty in the relationship between the players, both migrant children and the host community children, and can lead to effective interaction between them. The children used such terms as “together”, “sharing information”, “vital to talk” to indicate connecting to the online social capital (see table 4.2). Playing OVGs is a serious social activity for the gamers (see table 4.1; 4.3) that has been shown to improve intimacy and cooperation between migrant gamers and the host community children (Coleman, 1988; Holland, 2009; Bourdieu, 1986).

The study results are consistent with those of Fox and Sim (2015) who showed that migrant children who have recently move to a new country cannot find social capital, but their parents can provide them with facilities to join social activities. Migrant children’s access to OVGs provides a space for them to extend their social interactions, which helps them find valuable social networks and information resources. The results further support the idea of building social capital for children based on their language competence and family social class that can increase the chance

of finding useful social resources and networks for children (Fox and Sim, 2015; Holland et al., 2007). The results are not in line with the previous studies that showed that playing OVGs can have a negative influence on online players' social embeddedness, and not guarantee the sociability of online players (Kraut et al., 1988; Collins & Freeman, 2013; Griffiths et al., 2004; Kowert & Oldmeadow, 2013).

5.2 Answer to the first research question

The first research question concerned the impact of OVGs on migrant children's social relationships with the host community children. The results showed that the migrant children generally embedded in the host community children. This finding is in contrast with that of Griffiths et al. (2004) and Kowert and Oldmeadow (2013) who found that online gamers were vulnerable and isolated. A possible explanation for this might be that social interaction through OVGs creates a different social network for migrant children through which they can communicate with the host community children based on their common interests. Table 4.5 shows that the study participants were connected with a lot of players in a virtual setting, but only met 10-15 of the players in the offline setting. Furthermore, OVGs have the potential to connect migrant children to the host community children based on their online activity (Demir & Weitekamp, 2007; Fox & Sim, 2015).

According to the results, the migrant children gamers met other players outside the game setting. Regarding the transformation of online weak ties to face-to-face communication, the results showed that many online interactions only remained within the online setting (see table 4.5). However, the virtual team members who did not know each other remained in the online setting only to win and compete.

The children confirmed that they met 10-15 online friends in the offline setting. The results are in line with the findings from a great deal of work done by Granovetter (1973) who described the idea of “the strength of weak ties”. According to the study results, the migrant gamers communicated with other online gamers in the game communities, and also met them face-to-face. This transformation created a wider set of opportunities for them to extend their social interactions with the host community children in the offline setting. The migrant players interacted with other online gamers whom they know from offline setting, which enabled them to build stronger interpersonal relationships. This result is consistent with that of Putnam (2001), who found that bridging and bonding social capital can connect the individual to social networks in the new environment. The ties created via online communication that did not transfer to offline settings are considered to have less value compared to face-to-face communication.

A previous study by William (2006) suggested that online relations do not provide bonding social capital. However, online weak ties usually result in bridging on weak ties and bonding social capital. The statements by the migrant children, such as “I prefer to play with those that I know”; “I look for players that I know them”; “My first choice is my friends that I knew them”; “I did not choose players randomly” and “I can manage whom I want to talk and bond to” showed that most of them were in the bridging level, and preferred to play with those whom they could meet in offline settings (see table 4.4).

The results display that the children make online interactions, and then expand their relationship with their online friends and also friends of friends in the offline setting. For instance, they met in school, talked in a group, and bonded to a social network to share information. It seems possible that the online gamers who meet each other offline be at a bridging step to open new information channels to build trust and increase social interactions that lead to bonding social capital. This

finding strongly supports the work of other researchers in this area (Mckenna et al., 2002; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2001; 2002; Barrera, 1989; William, 2006).

The study findings indicated that online connection with the host community children has positive implications for the migrant children who play OVGs, helping them integrate with the community based on the social ties. However, Migrant children need more time to be able to trust others and make stronger relationships. The results showed that when children share their identity in the team with the host community children, it can have a positive impact on the trust between the players, and increase the possibility of bonding (Walther, 1996). Bonding usually occurs between people with strong connections who are most likely to know each other. Migrant children who play online games play with their partners, therefore they can communicate and compete with other players, and take part in the virtual world. OVGs create a setting for migrant children to cooperate, compete and interact with children from the host community (see Table 4.6). The data confirmed the social integration and social embeddedness among the migrant children within the host community (Barrera, 1986; Dunkel-Schatter & Bennett, 1990). Table 5.1 presents significant statements from the migrant children regarding their perception about their social embeddedness that was explained in the theoretical backgrounds provided in chapter two. Social embeddedness has essential elements which have been explained in table 5.1.

Table 5.1
Social Embeddedness

Migrant children	Social outcomes of playing OVGs for migrant children	Significant statement	Perception about their social embeddedness	Function

1	<p>We always meet and talk... in the online setting, we depend on each other and need to exchange information to help each other and get help... those I know from the real life... We talk when we meet...</p>	<p>Express themselves, Meet and exchange information</p>	<p>Alliance, Guidance, Perceived positive behaviour, Self-reports, Social contact, Reciprocity</p>	<p>Receiving support Perception of social support</p>
2	<p>We play in a team and help each other... We join the teams to win... We trust each other ... We continue our discussion later and outside the game</p>	<p>Win, Help, Join, Trust</p>	<p>Alliance, Guidance, Support, Social contact, Reciprocity</p>	<p>Receiving support, Perception of social support</p>
3	<p>Both competition and wining matter We try to help and win ... We provide advice and share information ... We</p>	<p>Team play, Help, Wining, Share information</p>	<p>Guidance, Support, Sense of communality, Reciprocity</p>	<p>Receiving support, Perception of social support</p>

	continue our conversation later			
4	Full of fun ... I feel I have place inside groups ... Wining is dependent on team members helping each other... We talk outside the game and use other social channels to connect	Fun, Have place in the group	Attachment, Alliance, Support, Integration, Belonging, Social contact, Reciprocity	Receiving support, Perception of social support
5	We share information ... help each other to win Some are pro players, and I need their help ... We continue our offline interaction	Sharing Information, Help, Wining, perception of emotion	Reassurance, Alliance, Support, Social Contact, Reciprocity	Receiving support, Perception of social support
6	We need to help and support each other to win ... Our conversations on what happens in the game are transferred to offline settings ...	Need, Help, Support, Wining, Tangible contact	Alliance, Support, Attachment, Social Contact, Reciprocity	Receiving support, Perception of social support

7	Even competition ... full of joy ... Our conversations continue outside the game setting , and we use other social channels to connect	Joy, Wining, Belonging	Integration, Attachment, Activities, Social contact, Reciprocity	Receiving support, Perception of social support
8	We cooperate in teams to win ... Offline communication allows me to keep online interactions	Cooperate, Winning, Team play, Belonging	Attachment, Alliance, Support, Integration, Belonging, Social contact, Reciprocity	Receiving support, Perception of social support
9	We talk during team play, We help friends to win ... We like to experience these connections again in the offline setting	Play Together, Sharing information	Alliance, Attachment, Guidance, Support, Perceiving positive Behaviour, Social contact, Reciprocity	Receiving support, Perception of social support
10	Play together for a common goal ... share information to win Carry the information to offline settings	Team Play, Sense of belonging	Attachment, Alliance, Support, Sense of belonging, Reciprocity	Receiving support, Perception of social support

Tables 5.1 shows a possible explanation for improved social embeddedness among the migrant children. The migrant children used terms, such as ‘sharing’, ‘belonging’, ‘team play’, ‘helping each other’, ‘cooperation, ‘joy,’ and ‘support’ that indicated that they received support, and that they were also aware of other players supporting them. The children described times when playing in the online setting had not affected their face-to-face interactions. Moreover, the results showed that the time they spend on playing OVGs does not have any negative impact on their social embeddedness with the host community children. They meet their friends in the online setting, and the frequency of presence or absence in OVGs did not influence the children’s integration and social embeddedness in the offline setting (Lakey & Drew, 1997; Dunkel-Schatter & Bennett, 1990; Barrera, 1986).

These findings confirm that face-to-face interactions were occur between the migrant children and the host community children compare to any other online weak ties. Therefore, playing OVGs does not have any negative impact, such as causing social isolation for migrant children (Griffiths et al., 2004; kowert & Oldmeadow, 2013). Comparison of the findings with those of other studies confirm that social motivation was one of the leading causes of playing OVGs for the migrant children to find social interaction and less loneliness(Shen & Williams, 2011).

5.3 Answering the second research question

Answering the second question helps identify how the modality switching between online to offline setting bridge the communication gap between the migrant and host community children.

Modality switching brought social motivation for migrant children to paly online games.

The results revealed that modality switching and communication from online to offline setting also influenced interpersonal trust. The migrant children had name’s tags in online games, such as

SuperGurl3500, Goshtwinner, and About30ninjas which helped them play anonymously. The migrant children revealed their real identities only to those they met in the offline setting (see table 4.5). One of the consequences of modality switching from online to offline setting was reduced uncertainty experienced by the children when they transferred their online interactions to face-to-face connections that influenced the development of their social interactions (Ramirez & Zhang, 2007). It also affected migrant children's social embeddedness and their integration with the host community children. The children transferred their online weak ties to offline settings and vice versa. The migrant children continued their social interactions and communicate outside the game setting, when they meet face-to-face the host community children. Children's social motivation played an important role in switching communication from online to offline settings, therefore embedded to social capital. A better explanation for these results might be that playing online games motivated the migrant children to spend their online time with those online players they expected to meet offline. The migrant children were motivated to play in teams and to feel they belonged to an online team that aided to establish relationships and build strong interpersonal ties (see table 4.1).

The transference and switching of online communication to offline settings increases the degree of certainty, and also face-to-face social interaction can enhance trust among children, leading to the growth of their relationships with the host community children who interested and play OVGs (Haythornthwaite, 2005).

The modality switching from OVGs to offline settings enabled the migrant children to connect with the host community children, and also the offline communications seemed to be promising in strengthening relationships between the online weak ties who meet face-to-face. This is in contrast with the results of earlier studies suggesting that online gamers are socially inept (Kowert &

Oldmeadow, 2013). The results confirmed that playing OVGs provided an opportunity for the migrant children to communicate with online weak ties from the host community in the offline setting (Haythornthwaite, 2005).

The transference of communications from online to offline settings (media multiplexity) can help migrant children in bonding social capital. The results confirmed that the modality switching and transference of online communication to the offline setting provided an opportunity for them to interact with the host community children (see table 4.7). They used terms, such as ‘connecting with all of them’; ‘communicating with each other,’ and ‘meeting in school’ confirmed that switching modalities occurred in the children’s communication. However, there is evidence showing that the transference of online communication to the offline setting does not always lead to strong relationships. Strong interpersonal relationships only happened between a few of them. Furthermore, bonding social capital could be promising in creating strong ties between migrant children and those they meet offline. However, the results could not indicate the significant impact of playing OVGs on intimacy and close relationships between the migrant children and gamers from the host community. The statements from the migrant children indicated that modality switching and the transference of communication from online to offline setting was positive when they met each other in offline setting. Nevertheless, it did not always influence their intimacy and close interpersonal relationships. For instance, they provided such statements as ‘close to one or two of them’; ‘close to some of them’; ‘not really close to all of them’; ‘They cheat on the game; ‘They are quite different in the digital space’...’They are creepy and cunning when playing OVGs’; ‘It is just talking,’ and ‘not everyone’; these indicate that modality switching does not always lead to greater intimacy (Walther, 1992).

On the other hand, the migrant children showed a high level of general integration and embeddedness in terms of the number of their friends. The migrant children revealed that there was a high possibility that they had more online interactions with those they met physically via other online channels, like telephone calls, Snapchat, and Discord by sending and receiving messages to help each other. The additional communication channels reinforce both the socialisation of migrant children and the communication aspects of their lives, such as extending their friendships circle.

The study results indicated some outcomes of playing OVGs, such as a high degree of modality switching, social embeddedness, low intimacy, and information seeking. These findings potentially show the positive impact of playing OVGs on migrant children's social and interpersonal interactions. Even if uncertainty emerges on their strong relationships, playing OVGs still provides the migrant children with a source of information (Walther, 1996; Haythornthwaite, 2005, 2007). A finding in contrast with those of previous studies was that the transference of online communication to offline settings did not create bonds between the migrant children and all the host community gamers when they met each other in the offline setting.

CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSION

6.1 Conclusion

The main finding of the present study provided some knowledge on online to offline setting related to playing OVGs and social embeddedness of migrant children within the host community. The study examined migrant children's communication via OVGs and transference of this communication to the offline setting. The study results indicated that the transference of online communications during playing OVGs to the offline setting had a positive impact on migrant children sociability, and helps them extend their social circles when moving to another country, and this is likely to give them a chance to bond social capital.

Additionally, the study investigated modality switching between online weak ties and offline settings to investigate the role of playing OVGs in the social embeddedness of migrant children in the host community. This study provided significant insights on the impact of playing OVGs on the integration of migrant children with the host community children. The study revealed that playing OVGs is not the only leisure activity for migrant children, but it is a new communication channel that can facilitate connection between migrant children and the host community children, therefore connecting migrant children to the social capital by bridging on online weak ties. Communication via OVGs had a positive effect on migrant children's social embeddedness, and allowed them to exchange information with other players and find new source of information. Modality switching between online and offline settings had the potential to connect migrant children to social structure, and this social interaction could result in bonding social capital. The results do not indicate a high degree of intimacy between migrant children and the host community gamers in the offline setting, however, show the optimal level of communication and integration

achieved through modality switching. Playing OVGs can be useful for migrant children, at least for achieving primary social embeddedness in a new environment.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

The present study is an original master thesis focused on communication and OVGs which provides a new perspective on migrant children's social embeddedness, and attempts to examine different aspects of the topic, such as the impact of playing OVGs, social outcomes of OVGs and migrant children's social embeddedness to increase our understanding of children's today lives. The present research was carefully conducted, but it still had some limitations. The main limitations of this study were that the respondents were children and self-report respondent used to gather data; it would have been better if the study had been done using both interviews and observation in both online and offline settings. In addition, the study questions were only aimed at assessing migrant children's social embeddedness, and were not focused on the impact of participants' friendship quality. Therefore, the level of intimacy between migrant children and the host community children is still unclear, and needs to be observed in the offline settings. Finally, there was time limitations, and the research was only conducted on a small sample form the population. Hence, the research should have been conducted with a larger sample consisted of migrant children form different ages and both genders.

6.3 Suggestions for future studies

The study sample was only comprised of boys, therefore, caution should be taken in generalising the results to migrant girls. Future studies are suggested to work with both girls and boys in large samples, and measure them together. Moreover, the future studies are suggested to try to gain a

deep, intuitive understanding of the impact of playing OVGs on migrant children both online and offline. Therefore, future studies need to fully consider the implications of communication via OVGs for the interactions between migrant children and the host community children.

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APPENDICES

Interview Questions

- How old are you?
- Where are you from?
- How long you have been in Sweden?
- Do you play online video games?
- Do you talk with other online players when you are playing OVGs?
- How many people do you communicate via online games, both known and unknown people?
- How many people do you communicate that you meet in real life?
- Do you feel closer to the players that you know them both virtually and physically? (Social OVGs in relationship with communication, social embeddedness and the impact of modality switching).