**Chip 'n Dale : Rescue Rangers**

**About the game:**

Chip 'n Dale: Rescue Rangers(CnD) is a single-player as well as 2-player cooperative 2D platformer video game released in 1990 and developed and published by Capcom based on the Disney animated series. In the cooperative mode, the two characters - Chip and Dale have the ability to walk, run, jump, pick up objects, throw them at enemies, pick each other up and throw them at a certain height, etc. to complete the levels and defeat the bosses cooperatively. Another similar game is Contra : where 2 players coordinate with each other, shooting the enemies to complete the levels.

**Cooperative(Co-op) Gameplay:**

A co-op is a type of mode in which 2 or more players play a game as a team, mutually cooperating with each other to defeat enemies or to successfully achieve a certain goal. It is a mode in which both the players are dependent on each other at a certain level to get a job done. There are different types of coop modes: 2-player, multiplayer, 2-player competitive, multiplayer competitive, etc. There are different behaviours which suggest coop gaming can prove to be superior to competitive gaming in some aspects. These are:

*Psychological:*

It can be easily observed that gamers who tend to play competitive games have greater levels of tension, anxiety, depressing conditions than that of the cooperative gameplay gamers. Usually, competitive gameplay always creates an environment of constant tension of winning and being better than everyone else. In contrast, cooperative gameplay offers interaction with other team members, a group activity of achieving a particular sum of goals which proliferates the success-rate of the group as a whole. Maller J. B. (1929) found that, “competition between groups will bring forth greater effort than individual work without competition." Very little focus is implemented on the individual success and winning and behemoth importance is given to the gameplay where gradual/step by step progression is made towards attaining a particular goal by mutual cooperation and highly strategized team-work.

The individual competitive gameplay demonstrates the loneliness of a player and gives sprouts to the aggressiveness and riling up behaviours. Conversely, cooperative gameplays bring out the engagement of the player into the game, just to enjoy the interactions and communications with other players as well as the gameplay while completing the allotted tasks, without fully focusing on the individual growth and pressurizing intensely on being superior to every other player. In Cnd coop mode, both the players have to exhibit great mutual coordination while making use of each other as another object, not crossing each other's paths while attacking enemies, giving each other equal opportunities to kill the enemies(each enemy dies when hit 2 times with an object), etc.

There is also a combination of these two modes: the cooperative-competitive gameplay mode. Here, the players play in groups to compete with other groups to achieve a certain common goal. This mode gives rise to another kind of behaviour discussed below.

*Pro-social:*

Coop gameplays make players get involved with other players to share limited number of resources. Coop gaming makes a player more generous to his teammates and learn to make proper use of the resources while making them available for other teammates too. Also, the players help those from the opposite competing teams in providing the resources they currently need. In a study at Texas Tech University, Assistant Professor of Journalism and Electronic Media John Velez stated that "The NBA Street Homecourt study also showed that players who were good teammates were more likely to give money to someone on the other team without expecting anything in return during a round of the prisoner’s dilemma game." This suggests that, in a cooperative game, players tend to socialize more and are more calm and fair rather than being vigorous at the gameplay. In Cnd, the players communicate with each other and make equal use of the resources to shoot down the enemies and overcome obstacles.

*Cultural:*

Cultural behaviour implies to the status a particular player maintains in his network of people or the teammates. In a single player competitive game, an individual has a lot of pressure to constantly keep balancing his status. He has to keep pushing himself and even an occasional downgraded play exacerbates his overall accumulated status. This, in turn, affects the psychological behaviour of the player and he becomes more aggressive. As opposed to this, in a cooperative game, the player can relax upon the intense pressure and does not have to keep maintaining the status at every point of the game. He works in co-ordinance with his teammates and even if he loses track at times, the teammates help him to catch up with them. The players don't have to maintain their status around each other, just their coordination plays a key role during the game.

**Perks of Co-op gaming:**

*Engagement:*

In competitive games, the player's intensity of engagement in its character is more than in coop games. But, the time period of the engagement is more in the coop games. Player engages himself by communicating and coordinating with his teammates while completing the current tasks in order to achieve the long-set goal. Interacting with other players and strategizing their way towards the goal, two-folds the essence of a particular game. For example, in CnD single player mode, a player starts getting bored after a certain period of time and patience. But, the two player coop mode helps bring out new challenges based on teamwork and balance of the tasks. Thus, engagement is a concomitant of a better gameplay and interaction.

*Player's partial strength:*

Sometimes, it happens that a particular player's strength lies only in some areas of the game. Here, coop gaming plays a major role. The players can divide the tasks among themselves according to their superiority and priority levels in doing certain tasks. The players have to carefully allot specific tasks to the appropriate teammates in order to attain the goal. They have to balance the see-saw of their strengths and weaknesses with the other teammates. A single player's downgraded gameplay can affect the overall gameplay of the team and hence, they have to maintain the level of the play by putting in different styles of gameplays throughout the game.

*More Enjoyment:*

We can all agree that games are more fun when they are played in a group with some interactions, give and take of ideas and communicational teamwork. Some of us might disagree on this, but coop is considered more constructive than the competitive games. Enjoyment is basically a factor of interactions and constant unpredictable feedback from either the game or the players playing the game. Playing a same game over and over again in coop mode involves more thrill and dynamic changing expectations than playing it in competitive mode. For example, playing Counter Strike with bots(Artificial Intelligence) is always proven to be inferior to playing it with other clans.

*Dynamic Strategies:*

Different changing strategies have to be applied at different levels of the game. Different perspectives and thoughts for the game are shaped and brought up while playing with other players. The players learn from the fellow companions and apply those things further in the game. There is a very less predictability factor over the behaviour of the gameplay of team members or the opposing players too.

In conclusion, cooperative gameplay (be it a 2-player, multiplayer or cooperative-competitive) has proven to be more effective and engaging. 'Chip 'n Dale: Rescue Rangers' was one of the first cooperative games that brought about this evolution to the gameplays. The player made proper use of its partner which accounted in more enjoyment and engagement in the overall process.

**-Kunal Patil**