Communication Behavior of Former Online Game Addicts Based on a Religious Perspective

Yogie Alontari[1], Ike Junita Triwardhani[2], Engkus Kuswarno[3], Dedeh Fardiah[4]

Abstract

Online games have quite a big influence on the people who play the game. People nowadays are used to using gadgets to play online games. Online games have become a new trend that is in great demand because someone no longer plays alone (single), but allows playing with dozens of people at once from various locations (multiplayer), even in other parts of the world. As a researcher, I want to highlight the negative side of playing online games, of course, this impact is not expected by anyone who plays online games. However, in reality, this negative impact continues to be felt by users, because the effects of addiction make it difficult for users to stop their habit of playing online games. Based on concerns about this, researchers have not yet received research results that discuss how online game users can stop this habit. Because of several previous research literature, all of them are only suggestions that can be applied to online game users. No one has discussed research on how former online game users can change and survive their addiction to playing online games. So of course the results of this research can not only be used as advice but can be proven and put into practice by anyone who has the same background, namely the difficulty of getting rid of online game addiction. Researchers consider this research important because research on the influence of online games from the perspective of former users or survivors has not yet been found to have been researched. After all, something is interesting that happens when someone manages to survive addiction to online games, it will have the impact of extraordinary changes in their life. In connection with what has been explained, the researcher intends to examine the communication behaviour of former online game users or survivors, to study, explore, and analyse how communication behaviour is formed from changes in habits made by online game survivors based on a religious perspective.

Keyword: *Phenomenology, Interpersonal Communication, Addiction, Online Games, Religious Perspectives.*

Introduction

The phenomenon in online games in various circumstances is something that must be paid attention to. The presence of online games has created a new condition for everyone, namely the danger of online game addiction. Online games have an engaging quality that makes people play with passion, leading to addictive behavior. People love to be tied up in front of a screen for hours on end. In addition, online games are designed for "instant" improvement if the game has succeeded in achieving a certain mission, so that online games stimulate users to make more demands and then bind them, in this case, users do not have a priority in completing their daily activities.

[1] Universitas Islam Bandung, Indonesia
[2] Universitas Islam Bandung, Indonesia
[3] Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia, Email: 30080022002@unisba.ac.id
[4] Universitas Islam Bandung, Indonesia

Online gaming addiction seems to last 20-25 hours per week (on average). Online game addiction can cause time lapses, inattention, hyperactivity, violence, negative emotions, and aggressive behavior. Violence in online games can have a stronger effect leading to aggression towards users because online games are very interesting and interactive games, online games contain games with violent behavior, and users repeatedly behave violently due to playing in the game environment.

Online games have a huge impact on the people who play them. Nowadays, people are used to using devices to play online games. Online games are a new trend that is in great demand because you can no longer play alone but with dozens of people at once from different locations (multiplayer), even in other parts of the world.

Online games that are popular on the market are not only for entertainment, but can also stimulate the imagination in the form of online games, such as presenting a problem and then thinking about the problem with the consequences of winning or losing. In its development, games that should be intended for adults are also played by children and teenagers. Because there is no filter from the government that prohibits every resident from playing games according to their age category. So, there are quite a few cases of violence that occur to children because they are influenced by violent games.

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The development of communication technology has opened a new chapter in human life, this is reflected in the creation of a new and culturally unlimited social context, perhaps even global

and transnational. One of the results of the development of information and communication technology that has had a significant impact on human interaction is online games.

Before the research topic was chosen as the theme of the research, researchers had made observations for a long time about the anxiety experienced by various parties affected by addiction to playing online games, both from former online game users to the surrounding environment. And in fact, researchers have found that there are many survivors or former online game users who have succeeded in stopping completely and it has had a tremendous impact on their lives.

If we explore further how online games have an influence, almost all or the majority of research that discusses themes or topics about online games, examines how online games produce effects on the players. It could be good or bad. If this effect has a good influence, then we don't need to doubt or discuss it in too much detail anymore, because, of course, every person who plays online games hopes that they will benefit from playing online games.

Here, as a researcher, I want to highlight the negative side of playing online games, of course, this impact is not expected by anyone who plays online games. However, in reality, this negative impact continues to be felt by users, because the effects of addiction make it difficult for users to stop their habit of playing online games.

Based on concerns about this, researchers have not yet received research that discusses how online game users can stop this habit. Because of several previous research literature, all of them are only suggestions that can be applied to online game users. No one has discussed research on how former online game users can change and survive their addiction to playing online games. So of course, the results of this research can not only be used as advice but can be proven and put into practice by anyone who has the same background, namely the difficulty of getting rid of online game addiction.

From here, researchers are interested in seeing how identity construction and communication behavior are built when an online game user succeeds in stopping the habit of playing online games. Of course, based on the cultural dimension, we will examine in more depth detail how former or former online game survivors have changed their habits.

The problem on which this research was conducted is due to the massive development of gamers among users, so the question arises, can an online game user be free from addiction to playing online games? This will become the basis for questions and be developed in this research. Likewise, this research will explore the location or position of an online game user in terms of his identity and behavior. With the hope that it will produce examples of real evidence that having an addiction to playing online games can be stopped.

Researchers consider this research important because research on the influence of online games from the perspective of former users or survivors has not yet been found to have been researched. After all, something is interesting that happens when someone manages to survive addiction to online games, it will have the impact of extraordinary changes in their life.

Methodology

Research Methods

The research method used qualitative methods. Qualitative research focuses on observing phenomena and investigating their nature and meaning. The power of the words and phrases

used has a significant impact on the analysis and understanding of qualitative research. Basri (2014) stated that the essence of qualitative research is the process and results of meaning. Qualitative research emphasizes human elements, objects, and institutions as well as the relationships and interactions between these elements to understand events, activities, and phenomena.

In general, qualitative research can be used for research on community life, history, behaviour, organizational functionalization, social activities, and so on. This is the reason for choosing a qualitative research paradigm in this study to find out and analyse social activities as the focus of the study, namely the communication patterns carried out, as well as to find out and understand what is hidden behind the phenomenon of online game addiction from the perspective of former users or survivors based on religious perspective.

Sales, etc. (2002) found that methods are influenced by paradigms and are paradigms that reflect ways of viewing reality. Then, Kasinath (2013) argues that the reasons for using qualitative methods are (a) the researcher's perspective on phenomena in the world, (b) the nature of the research questions, and (c) practical suggestions related to the nature of qualitative methods. This type of research is field research with a phenomenological approach, although this method is appropriate if the research is about how and why. Phenomenological research can be explained as a qualitative method for investigating and finding common meanings of a concept or phenomenon that forms the experience of a group of individuals.

The data collection technique was carried out through observation, documentation studies, interviews, and triangulation (combined). Meanwhile, qualitative data processing was carried out through three stages, namely data reduction, data display, and data verification through source triangulation (conclusion drawing) (Miles & Huberman, Sugiyono, 2018:337).

The phenomenological approach aims to describe the meaning of the life experiences of a group of individuals according to certain symptoms by examining the human condition. Therefore, researchers want to use this phenomenological study to find out how much significance the experiences of online game survivors have on their communication behaviour.

Results and Discussions

The majority of players tend to be tied in front of the screen for hours, experience time lapses, lack attention, and hyperactivity, and show aggressive behaviour and negative emotions. Violence in online games can also stimulate users to behave violently, creating an interactive environment that has the potential to create aggression in the real world.

The importance of online game addiction is placed in the context of a society that is increasingly accustomed to using devices to play games. This phenomenon is not just entertainment but also creates a new trend with the popularity of multiplayer games that allow interaction between dozens of people from various locations. However, the negative impact of online game addiction, especially on children and adolescents who are vulnerable to the influence of violent games, shows the need for more attention to regulation and age control in-game access. Online game addiction is not a trivial problem. The impact involves various aspects of life, including mental health, aggressive behaviour, and daily productivity. Therefore, there needs to be further efforts from relevant parties, including the government and game developers, to create stricter regulations related to the use of online games, especially by children and teenagers.

Understanding the identity construction and communication behaviour of former online game users who successfully overcome their bad habits can provide valuable insight into helping

others who are struggling with similar addictions. The development of effective intervention strategies and rehabilitation programs can be an important step in addressing this problem. In a cultural context, this research also shows that the influence of online games is not only individual but also involves cultural factors that influence user identity and behaviour. Therefore, a holistic and culture-based approach needs to be considered in developing solutions to overcome online gaming addiction.

Negative Impact of Online Game Addiction

Online gaming addiction creates addictive behaviour patterns, where users can be tied to the screen for hours. Game designs that provide instant rewards after achieving certain missions reinforce this addictive behaviour, making it difficult for users to stop their gaming habits. The impact on mental health is also very striking. Online gaming addiction can result in time lapses, inattention, hyperactivity, and even aggressive behaviour. Especially in children and teenagers, exposure to violence in games can form worrying aggressive behaviour. Additionally, the lack of an age filter on games often results in content that is intended for adults being accessed by younger age groups.

Technological developments have made online gaming a global trend that not only provides entertainment but also changes the way people interact in society. Multiplayer and interactivity in online games provide a more immersive gaming experience, but on the contrary, can create social isolation because users are too focused on the virtual world.

The inability of users to stop the habit of playing online games indicates difficulties in overcoming this addiction. This impact is all the more confusing because not much research has specifically discussed how former online game users manage to overcome addiction and change their identity and behaviour after quitting. This suggests the need for further research to understand the processes and challenges faced by those trying to escape the cycle of online gaming addiction.

Online Game Addiction and Children

Children who are exposed to online games are at high risk of experiencing negative impacts on their development and health. One aspect worth noting is the lack of age filters on many games, which allows children to access content that should not be appropriate for their age. Violence in online games is also a major concern because it can form aggressive behaviour in children who are still in the developmental stage.

The importance of social interaction in children's development makes online games with multiplayer modes a significant attraction. However, on the contrary, this can also cause social isolation because children prefer to interact in the virtual world rather than the real world. Time spent in front of a screen playing online games can also interfere with daily activities, such as studying, playing outside, and interacting directly with peers or family.

Children's inability to manage their play time wisely can result in an imbalance in their lives. In addition, parents' lack of understanding of the games their children play and the tendency to provide gadgets as entertainment tools can worsen the situation of online game addiction in children. Therefore, educating parents and policymakers, as well as implementing stricter age controls, is key in protecting children from the negative impacts of online game addiction and ensuring they grow up physically and mentally healthy.

The Role of Technology and Online Games in Society

The role of technology and online gaming in society has changed the landscape of human interaction significantly. The emergence of communication technology and the internet has opened the door to new trends, including the phenomenon of online gaming which is rampant in society. Online games are not just entertainment, but also create new social contexts that are not limited culturally and can be global and transnational.

Online games are not only played individually but also offer the experience of playing with dozens of people at once from various locations, especially with the multiplayer mode. This strengthens social connectivity between players who may be in different parts of the world. Games that are interactive and often require cooperation between players can build strong online communities.

Apart from that, online games have also become a new trend that is very popular. Modern society is increasingly accustomed to using digital devices, such as computers and smartphones, to play games. Online games have become a flexible form of entertainment and can be accessed by anyone, at any time, without being limited by geographical boundaries. This phenomenon has not only created a huge entertainment industry but also plays an important role in building cultural identity and lifestyle in the digital era.

However, while the role of technology and online games has a positive impact, it is also necessary to be aware that too much involvement in the virtual world can lead to social isolation. People may be more likely to engage in online interactions than in the real world, influencing traditional social dynamics. Therefore, there needs to be a good balance between engagement in technology and social interactions in the real world to ensure healthy and sustainable use of technology in society.

Positive Changes After Overcoming Online Game Addiction

Positive changes in former users' lives after successfully overcoming online gaming addiction include increased productivity and mental well-being. Many former users report that they were able to divert time previously spent playing online games to more rewarding activities. This includes achieving career goals, improving skills, and focusing on education or work.

Increased productivity is often associated with changes in sleep patterns and more effective time management after stopping the habit of playing online games. Former users may find new motivation to pursue their dreams and achieve their life goals. Additionally, many former users report improved mental well-being. Quitting online gaming addiction often leads to reduced levels of stress and anxiety. Liberation from the virtual world opens up opportunities to build healthier social connections, increase self-confidence, and improve interpersonal relationships.

Conclusions

This research underscores that online gaming addiction has significant negative impacts, particularly on mental health, aggressive behaviour, and daily productivity. The majority of players tend to fall into addictive behavioural patterns, facing risks of social isolation, and encountering difficulties in discontinuing their online gaming habits. Violence in online games is also a concern, especially for children and adolescents who are susceptible to the influence of violent gameplay.

The study emphasizes the importance of stricter regulations regarding online gaming, particularly for vulnerable age groups. Governments, game developers, and parents need to

collaborate to protect children and adolescents from the negative effects of online gaming addiction. Furthermore, a deeper understanding of the construction of identity and communication behaviour of former users who successfully overcome addiction provides valuable insights for the development of effective intervention strategies and rehabilitation programs.

The research also highlights that while technology and online gaming play a positive role in social connectivity and entertainment, there is a need for a balanced approach between the virtual and real worlds. Awareness of the risks of social isolation and efforts to maintain social interactions outside online gaming platforms are crucial aspects of promoting healthy and sustainable technology use.

In conclusion, this research provides an in-depth understanding of the negative impacts of online gaming addiction and its implications in modern society. Coordinated efforts from various stakeholders and a holistic approach are necessary to address the challenges associated with online gaming addiction, ensure the protection of children, and promote balanced and beneficial technology use in society.

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