



ISBN 978-602-08985-3-7

*Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Innovative Pedagogy
(ICIP 2017) STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena May 18-19, 2017
Banda Aceh, Indonesia*



THE IMPACT OF ONLINE GAMES ON SOCIAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT ON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Online game is a fond kind of game that has become the most favorite of adults, teenagers, and even children gamers who are still under mental development. Related to this issue, online games have a lot of either positive or negative impact towards children. Some of the negative impacts are on social development such as addiction, resentment, rudeness, anti-social, being isolated, and less of socialization skill. Otherwise, the positive impacts of this online game are habituating children to be responsible, friendly, visionary, having self-control, hard-working, and being a person who likes to share, and many other impacts. In line with social development, online games also give effect to children cognitive development, for instance, children who play a game online have a strong memory, better problem-solving skills, capability to synchronize their brains, hands and their eyes, and they have a high comprehension skill.

Keywords: *Online Games, Social and Cognitive Development*

INTRODUCTION

The technological development are no longer deniable and stoppable. Each day the technological companies compete to discover more sophisticated devices than their predecessors. One of the common technological discoveries among the society is the computer and internet connection. Purwanto has pictured that the technological development may bring the basic essential change in fulfilling the information need of human being. The best technological discovery is the internet as the limitless and accessible connection in anytime (2008), this phenomenon is caused by the technological development.

Internet discovery has lead the world of gaming into a new sensation. The old games was played without any network but since the discovery of the Internet, some of the games have been played online. The games developer are keep inventing new kinds of games, such as the games in adventure, challenge, and war. Andriani, et. al (2011) stated that offline games are different with the online games. Therefore, it is expected to the users and gamers to wisely alter the gained information from the internet since the information in the internet and online games has a wide information and action that is not filtered yet.

In Indonesia, online games are very popular among children and adults. It can be proven through the increasing of the users and gamers day by day. This phenomenon is caused by the update of the games that bring the new experience and offer the new visual graphic of the games to the users. (Andriani, et. al. 2011). Some new games appear to the surface by bringing a new complexity and many violence which is not quietly appropriate to children's' development. Comparatively, children users are more susceptible to the online games than the children users specially children who are in the elementary school. Now days, children are getting more addictive to games online. They spend more of their times sitting and looking at their devices playing online games than studying. Some of the reason to this addiction is the tight competitiveness in the games that are updated weekly or even daily.

However, online games has a positive and negative impact toward the society but games only have been considered more as a bad influence to the children development. Contralily, Pratama (cited from Piri. 2014) has stated that there are some advantages of playing online game. Online game provide an interesting leisure time for children to "kill the time". In line with the statement of Hermawan (2007) who stated that playing online games is an Entertainment to eliminate boredom in a daily routine. Additionally, online games also help its users to find a new acquaintance in online games with the newest feature of the chat feature in some of online games which probably will allow them to communicate through social media.

Moreover, online games also bring a positive impact toward the social and cognitive development. This fact was identified through the research that was conducted in Australia which found that online games can effectively enhance the knowledge and the skill in mathematics, reading,

science as well as ease the learning activity and homework. Furthermore, online game can develops children problem solving, exercising the harmony between eyes and hand's movement and the motoric skill. But the impact of online game is not perceived by all children, online games influenced negatively to some children which cause the children development hampered. This phenomenon is due to the overtime spent by children to play games rather than to study. To sum up, children get some positive impacts from playing online games such as having more acquaintance but in other hand, children will be isolated from the real world which likely will have a bad impact to their social development.

In 2001 online games is started in Indonesia, it was the entry of Nexia Online games. The online games is quite diverse that were exist in Indonesia, there are the action genre, sport, and role-playing game. Online games are a fun games. As the results of Suryanto (2015) research, it found that the average student spends 4-6 hours in one of playing time. Thus, is not a short duration in playing it even some of them have the differential goals on it. Online games is not the only games that can make someone in pleasure but it also can reduce a stress. On the other hand, online game can cause the players addicted in it. This is in line with what Trismarinda said in Amanda (2016), that online game has a tendency to make the players preoccupation until they forget the duties and responsibilities. For instance, if the player is a student, he will often ignoring his duties and responsibilities as a student.

Piliang (2011) explains that the children behavioral was changed due to the lack of traditional games and it caused by the online games and also the limit space to play the traditional games, this is also due to technological developments. People living in modern era tend to have high entertainment and the children is also pretend to do it as an adult. One of the entertainment facilities for children is online games.

According to Pitaloka (2013) research, it is revealed about three things that is why the child interested in online games, firstly is due to the early socialization of digital games. Since childhood they are known the type of game that is similar to play station. She found that almost all respondents stated that since childhood they knew the play station. It means that digital games such as online games and play station are not really a new things in a child's life. Secondly is the availability of technology-based

facilities. Since childhood they have been introduced with computers, gadget, and the others technology.

Those encourages the children to love online games. It cause a curiosity of the children that encourages them to play online games, not only because of the entertainment but more because it considers as a good technology products that save a lot of answers to their curiosity. Thirdly is to spend their free time. Unwittingly they love online games because they do not have many activities that should be done, lonely, and bored that make the children or gamers interested in playing online games. The academic activity also make online games as a good place for students to skip their difficult activities. School activities, extracurricular and tutoring are a burden to them. Their playing time is also automatically reduced due to the large number of academic activities. Those reason can be caused to the children social development.

Social development is the development of behavior in children, where the children must adapted it based on the rules that apply in the community environment. In other words, social development is a child's learning process in conforming to norms, morals and traditions within a group (Joseph in Yahro, 2009). Piaget shows that the existence of a high egocentric nature in children is appear because the child has not been able to understand the differences of the others perspective (Suyanto, 2005). Moreover, the aspects of social behavior is about empathy, generosity, cooperation, and caring. So psychologically, at this stage is the ability of children, it is both interpersonal and personal ability of the children toward each other (Tamba, 2014).

The behavior of socialization is learned not only to become a maturity person but it also about the process of it. Social development of the children is obtained based on the process of maturity and learning opportunities (Nurmalitasari, 2015). A good social development is obtained from healthy social responses and opportunities that give to the children to develop their positive self-concept (Nurmalitasari, 2015). In relation to socialization, Hurlock (1997) explains that children need a process to socialize it well, and a good time to familiarize them with the social environment, it is when the children start their kindergarten. Sujanto (in Hidayat, 2013) says that students or children socialize outside the home with peers, even with adults is the ideal concept of it.

In addition, parenting also give a great affect in the child's social development process. The results of the study also show that the quality of the nurturing environment is increasingly accompanied by the age of the child maturity. It means that the better parenting of parents, the better of the social development of children.

Child social development is also related to the cognitive development. This is in line with Piaget that classifies about four states of cognitive development, there are: (1) Sensorimotor phase is starting from 0 to 2 years old, (2) Pre-Operational phase is starting from 2 to 7 years old, (3) Concrete Operational phase is starting from 7 to 11 years old, and (4) Formal Operational phase is starting from 11 years old till adult

METHODS

The methodology used in this study is the study of literature, which is analyzing the opinions of experts, then the researcher took a conclusion about the impacts of online games on the social life and cognitive development of elementary students..

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Impact of Online Game on Social Development

It is known that children are very vulnerable influenced by the environment. Something that a child finds in his or her environment will be left behind in their mind. If they found something good, then the child will be more better life they will be growth, and vice versa. The influence of the environments will certainly have an impact on the child, both positive and negative impacts. It is as same as the children that have their daily live and spent their free time in the game environment. In other words, children who spend time in playing online games, then the environment is online games. As suggested by Trismarinda, online games addicted will certainly have an impact on the child. In this case, the most visible impact is on social development.

Online games can make players addicted. If this happens, the child will do anything in order to continue how to play online games. The child will do anything to earn the money in order to pay the cost of the cafe or to buy game vouchers that they will be played. School-age addiction toward the online games can be seen based on the previous studies that focus on the school-age level addiction in playing online games. The results showed that

the level of addiction experienced against the school-age children reached a fantastic figure of 62%. Addiction to online games is the same as drug addiction. Where drug users are always looking for the ways to buy such illegal illicit. The parents should be worried about this phenomenon, because the child will do something that can be deviated. For instance, if the child does not have enough money to buy a voucher, then he will squeeze from his friend. Children who like to squeeze will be pointed negatively by his friends, teachers and the parents of other students. If this happens continually, the child will feel disrespected and rejected by his or her social environment and it can be impacted to the social development.

Furthermore, the children who are addicted to the game will be staying at their house, isolating themselves from social life and focusing themselves into the gaming world. Even though the games that they play are still socializing with the other players, but they will be forgetting their friends around the house. Those who are already addicted to the game will be more happy to find the friends who both love the game, because they can exchange their ideas about the game.

Something that the children get from the games in which they always play, it will be easily absorbed an unconsciously implemented in everyday life, such as being rude, selfish, not sociable, unstable emotions, and having a vengeful nature. This is in line with the results of the correlation research between playing online games that can be change someone attitudes or behaviors that presented in 59.41%, it is caused by the problems of respondents experiencing in the social context, they feel revenge if they were lost to play online games with the other teams (Amanda, 2016). The nature of resentment is not a good for the children, because it can trigger a dispute, especially if it is still at the age of child or elementary school students.

Online game is not only cause a negative impact, but it is also have a positive impact on children's social development that was defined by Suryanto (2015) in his research. Judging from the habits of online game players, showed a high social attitude of respondents is 53%. Social attitude can be a responsibility, visionary, have a good spirit, such as helping or sharing and intertwining between players. A positive attitude as stated above is certainly expected to appear more better and implemented in a child's life. To create it condition, it is needed a good attention and control of parents that considered to the family condition and the child environment

where they spend their free time. If parents are able to control their children who are addicted to online games, of course the parents do not have to worry about the negative impact. In contrary, if parents who are lose control and give a freedom to the children, the negative impact that will appear in their live.

The Impact of Online Game on Cognitive Development

Online game not only give a positive impact on social development, but it also have a positive impact on cognitive development. Children at primary school are in concrete operational phase, which is in 7-10 years old. In this classification, children at this age learn by using concrete objects, or in other words what did students see and experience is become their knowledge. When children unconsciously learning while playing a game, they will learn how to overcome the problems and train their higher thinking. In playing games, children require to think in high level in order to pass each stage of the game and they can continue it to the next level. The higher level of the game, the more difficult to solve it. So, it can be stated that the child who likes to play games have better sense of thinking and problem solving skills, this is also in line with Suryanto (2015), 40% of children who love to play online games have the power of reasoning and higher thinking level. It means, it will help them easier to solve the in their life, it can be in formal education or social environment problems. An action games and puzzle games can improve students' thinking skills in solving problems and making decisions to achieve the goal. Through it ability that they got from the games, the gamers who are mostly students can solve problems better than those who do not play a games in their daily life.

Meanwhile, the habit of playing games also trained the ability to stimulate the children brain to be in sync with the hands, and eyes. Some types of games that need it is the game of action genre, sport, shooting and also fighting. In addition to make a quick reflexes, the need of hand agility is also required the sharp eye accuracy to see the opportunity in order to win the game. This ability can also be reflected in real life to perform children activities that require capability in hand and eye coordination

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