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### Violence in Online Games: What is the Impact on Children's Behaviour?

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**Abstrak:** An online game is an entertainment service provided in the form of a game that can be accessed online via an Internet connection. The purpose of the study was to analyse violence in online games on children's behaviour and parents' behaviour towards children using mobile phones. This type of research is descriptive analytical with a cross-sectional approach. The sample in this study were parents who had teenage boys aged 10-15 years who played violent online games in Bandar Durian village, a total of 35 people. The results showed that the age of children playing online games ranged from 10-15 years with an addiction rate of 78%. Changes in children's behaviour after playing online games include speaking rudely, forgetting to eat, and using violence when someone disturbs children playing games. Currently, violent scenes in online games are influencing the attitudes of the users of game centres. Especially at the age of the average user, who is a teenager, who is still unstable and easily accepts what he sees. It is expected that online games, as a medium of communication, will be supervised by parents and the government so as not to have a negative impact on children.

**Keywords:** behaviour, children, online games

#### INTRODUCTION

The development of technology can replace the role of humans in daily activities. The existence of mobile phones makes it easy to access sites for downloading films or games. These sites can be easily accessed by both children and adults (Baqiah, 2016). Nowadays, the use of mobile phones has become a necessity for every child, because since the introduction of online learning, every child must have a mobile phone to receive learning materials delivered by the teacher. Most parents prefer to allow their children to use mobile phones so as not to disturb their busy schedules.

The development of children's behaviour is achieved through their experiences. The formation or development of children's behaviour is influenced by several factors, namely internal factors that come from within the child and external factors that come from outside the child (Anwar & Winingsih, 2021). In recent years, there have been many incidents or cases involving children that really need the attention of parents, educators and the wider community. For example, the increase in crimes committed by children ranging from bullying, theft, fights, sexual harassment to murder. These deviant behaviours are acquired by children through the use of online media (Cha & Seo, 2018).

Online Game is an entertainment service provider facility in the form of a game that can be accessed online using an internet connection. Each player can communicate directly and connect with each other. As a medium, online games are very influential on the human mind, which is absorbed through two senses, namely seeing and hearing (Novrialdy, 2019). Online games of concern to parents today are those that contain violence, as there are many types of these games and they will have an impact on children's development (Christiana Reali, 2016). According to psychologists, the worst effect of violent online games is the tendency of children to imitate. This online game offers more aggression than television shows because the display is in 4 dimensions, so it looks more real and interactive, so this broadcast can be an incentive for children to do the same (Dewi, 2020).

In principle, not all types of online games can have an effect on aggressiveness. Online games can be divided into two groups, namely aggressive and non-aggressive types of online games. Aggressive types of online games are, for example, arcade games. Arcade games are easy to understand, fun and have good graphics, although they are usually simple. Non-aggressive online games, because this type of game only 'processes' the brain and does not contain elements of violence, it can be assumed that aggressiveness will not occur (Dewi, 2020). The possibility of differences in the self-defense mechanisms of adolescents who

play aggressive and non-aggressive types of online games, and how different situations of cultural environmental conditions that have certain characteristics become an interesting phenomenon, besides the recent aggressiveness carried out by urban youth groups, is also an interesting study to discuss.

Online games with violent content have a strong influence on children's behaviour. Children who tend to imitate what they see are inspired to imitate what they see in the game in real life. This can be seen in the changes in children who become increasingly aggressive, which is shown by physical attacks such as hitting and kicking their friends. There are also verbal attacks such as cursing, mocking, insulting and swearing, using disrespectful words towards friends and parents. Children are also ignorant of their surroundings because they are too focused on playing activities. And also seen from the rights violations committed by children such as taking friends' belongings by force or without permission, neglecting worship, and also skipping classes so that they can play games with their friends outside the school environment. The purpose of this study, to analyze violence in online games on children's behaviour and parenting patterns to children in the use of mobile phones.

## METHODS

This type of research is descriptive analytical with a cross-sectional approach. The sample in this study were parents who had teenage boys aged 10-15 years who played violent online games in Bandar Durian village, a total of 35 people.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews in internet cafes that offer violent online games. In Bandar Durian Village, there is only 1 internet cafe that provides online gaming facilities. The cybercafe has 8 online gaming booths. The visitors are teenagers who play on average 2-3 hours per day. Questionnaires and interviews are given to children and parents who play online games. The characteristics of the respondents consisted of 3 (10 years old), 5 (11 years old), 5 (12 years old), 8 (13 years old), 7 (14 years old) and 7 (15 years old) with primary and secondary school status (Table 1).

**Table 1. Age characteristics of respondents**

Characteristics by age	F	%
10 yo	3	8,6
11 yo	5	14,2
12 yo	5	14,2
13 yo	8	23
14 yo	7	20
15 yo	7	20

The age distribution shows that the highest number of respondents was 8 (23%) among the 13 year old and the lowest number was 3 (8.6%) among the 10 year old. The results of the questionnaire for children with experience of addiction to online games with elements of violence were 25 people (78%) (table 2).

**Table 2. Distribution of addictive behaviours among children**

Addiction	F	%
Addicted	25	78%
Not Addicted	10	22%
Total	35	100%

Children usually ignore other interests, such as forgetting to eat while playing, and the desire to continue playing online games by increasing the amount of time they play in internet cafes. Based on observations, children tend not to want to go home when they are in the internet cafe because they still feel excited about playing online games, so there are even children who are picked up by their parents to go home. The types of online games that children often play are games with an armed war background such as Point

Blank, Counter Strike and there are those who play together for the game Mobile Legend. This is consistent with research (Christiana Reali, 2016). which states that the Department for Education's violent games are World of Warcraft, Call of Duty, Point Blank, Cross Fire, Counter Strike, Mortal Combat, Future Cop. Research findings (Fossum et al., 2014) has found that the majority of school children prefer to play video games that are set in armed wars.

### **Online Gaming Exposure**

Online media has a strong influence on individuals to commit acts of violence because it is easily accessible. Online games are one of the most popular online media among children aged 10-15. According to the results of the study, 23% of 13-year-old children like to play online games and the average respondent spends about 2-3 hours a day playing online games without a break. The results of this study are in line with *dengan* (Pitakasari et al., 2019) which found that respondents who were often exposed to violent online games were more numerous, 31 people (73.8%), than those who were rarely exposed, 11 people (26.2%). The age group least likely to be exposed to online games was the 15-year-old age group, with 4 people (9.5%), and the least likely to be exposed was the 17-year-old age group, with none. The most frequent exposure was among 13-year-olds, with 9 people (21.4%), and the least among 16- and 17-year-olds, with 3 people (7.1%).

### **Children's Behaviour**

Online games have an addictive effect on children. Children do not want to stop playing games and tend to ignore daily activities that are habitual for children before they get to know online games. Changes in children's behaviour occur along with the higher level of children's addiction to online games. Children are more aggressive and unwilling to socialise with their peers. The results showed that 78% of the children were addicted to online games. Based on the results of interviews with parents, it is stated that children always come home late, when talking to parents they often use rude words, children only come home to eat and bathe, there are even children who prefer not to come home just to play online games.

One of the factors influencing children's behaviour is the frequent playing of violent online games, and the mechanism often associated with aggressive behaviour is the social learning theory that playing aggressive online games stimulates aggressive behaviour because children imitate what they see on the screen when they play online games (Salainty et al., 2015). The process of shaping children's behaviour in the form of imitation, i.e. the imitation of other people's attitudes, perspectives and behaviour, is consciously undertaken by children and generally children begin to imitate or copy behaviour from the age of 3 by imitating the behaviour of people in their environment (Barlian et al., 2022).

The effects of gaming on children's development include Causes aggressive behaviour, especially in boys due to the tendency to play games with violent themes (Kurniawati & Purnomo, 2021) Neglecting other needs such as studying, eating, bathing, sleeping, and preferring to play games alone in front of the computer or television rather than hanging out with relatives or friends in the neighbourhood. Health problems, such as indigestion, hand cramps and others, because they often ignore the need to eat and rest. Causes emotional problems, such as frequent anger, moodiness, feeling alone, and getting angry when reprimanded for playing too long (Mahmudah, 2013).

Children who play violent online games for several years have a high rate of aggressive behaviour, according to expert analysis (Satria et al., 2015). Those who played non-violent games showed no signs of increased aggression. Even after taking into account other variables that might be associated with aggressive behaviour, the experts found that gender, parental divorce and cannabis use were also likely triggers (Syahran, 2015). According to a study also published in Developmental Psychology, adolescents who enjoy playing violent games may conclude that violence is an effective and appropriate way to deal with conflict and anger. For example, teenage girls who played violent games for years were shown to have the same temperament as boys who played similar games. The study also found that long-term violent game players tend to react more aggressively to unintentional provocation. Even if the provocation is as minor as someone accidentally bumping into them. Games may not be hardwired into the brain, but they can change the way

we think, according to a new study presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) (Kurniawati & Purnomo, 2021).

### **Online Games' Impact on Children's Behaviour**

Analysis of the results of this study showed that children who become addicted to playing online games start at the age of 10 - 15, which is when children are still in primary and junior high school. The role of parents and schools in shaping children's attitudes and habits in addition, schools also play an important role in education, as they have a great influence on children's psyche (Dewi, 2020). The results of the interviews with the parents showed that when they are at home, the children are released by the parents to play with their friends and there is no regulation on the time allowed for playing, so the children usually come home late and when they are at home, the children play online games on their smartphones until 11 pm. Changes in children's behaviour often observed by parents are that the child's speech is less polite, when invited for lunch the child prefers to play online games, so parents have to give bribes to get the child to eat.

This is a very sad situation, because the parents are not restricted in their play at home, so it is difficult for them to change their children's behaviour. Parents also said that children often use violence against their friends by hitting friends who are weaker than them and, if at home, they often hit their younger siblings if their younger siblings are disturbed while playing online games. Research findings (Pitakasari et al., 2019) that the higher the education, the better the attitude formation, so that young people can distinguish what is good for them and what is bad. During the research, the researchers found 3 respondents who claimed

to have lived as vagrants with the motive of following friends. Ten of the 42 respondents had dropped out of school. They get money from their parents to play online games, and there are also 4 teenagers who claim to work as buskers. The money earned from busking is used to buy cigarettes and play online games.

Children tend to imitate every event and behaviour of the actors they see, which can lead children to commit violence, which may be unintentional, and it makes the child's personality a violent one (Anwar & Winingsih, 2021). This study used teenage respondents, who have a higher level of reasoning than pre-school children. The results of this study showed that there was no link between exposure to online games and aggressive behaviour in adolescents, but at the time of data collection the researcher saw the respondents behaving aggressively themselves, for example slamming the mouse, even one of the respondents had harassed the researcher with indecent words. When parents filled in the questionnaire, it was found that not all parents were aware of their children's behaviour outside the home because they were not always with their children. At home the teenagers behave well, but outside the home or with their friends they behave aggressively due to the influence of the environment (Mais et al., 2020).

Online games can be described as a medium of entertainment and also as a social medium, because playing games also allows users to interact with other users. However, excessive use of online games can also affect users' social relationships. This is because users do not have much contact with the real world and instead what they see in online games constantly inspires them to imitate the scenes in online games. This ultimately shows a change in the user's attitude (Dewi, 2020). From the above description, it can be seen that the violent scenes in online games are currently influencing the attitudes of users of game centres. Especially at the age of the average user, who is a teenager, who is still unstable and easily accepts what he sees. It is expected that online games, as a medium of communication, will be supervised by parents and the government in order not to have a negative influence on young people.

### **CONCLUSION**

Online game use starts at the ages of 10 (8.6%), 11 (14.2%), 12 (14.2%), 13 (23%), 14 (20%) and 15 (20%), with an addiction rate of 78%. Online games influence children's behaviour as they prefer to play longer with their friends in internet cafes. Inconsistent parenting leads children to become addicted to violent online games. Parents do not set restrictions on playing online games outside the home and when children are at home.

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