

Online Game Addiction Behavior in Generation Z

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received October 11, 2024

Revised October 13, 2024

Accepted October 14, 2024

Keywords: Online game, Addiction behavior, Gen Z

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to analyze online game addiction behavior in generation Z, who were increasingly involved in the use of digital technology. Online game addiction had caused various negative impacts, especially on mental, physical and social health, such as aggressiveness, decreased motivation to learn, social isolation and emotional disorders. This research used a literature review method by examining the results of previous research in the period 2015-2024. The research results showed that online game addiction affected individuals, both in urban and rural settings, with reduced youth participation in social and academic activities. However, besides negative impacts, online games also had several positive benefits if used wisely, such as improving technological skills, mastery of foreign languages, and the ability to focus and concentrate. This research suggested the need for appropriate intervention strategies to minimize the negative impacts while maximizing the positive benefits of online games among generation Z.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology today has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including the behavior of the younger generation, particularly Gen Z. Gen Z, who have grown up amidst the rapid advancement of digital technology, exhibit media consumption patterns that differ from those of previous generations. One prominent trend is their high engagement in online gaming. Online games not only serve as a form of entertainment but have also become an important part of their daily lives, influencing various psychological and social aspects.

In recent years, research on online gaming addiction has experienced rapid development. Several previous studies have revealed that excessive involvement in online games can lead to addictive behaviors, which negatively impact mental and physical health, as well as academic performance. (Pontes, dkk, 2019). Literature review conducted by Cheng, et al. (2018) showing a connection between online gaming addiction and anxiety disorders, depression, and social isolation. However, most of these studies have focused more on the general population or previous generations, such as the Millennial generation, thus providing less specific insight into this phenomenon among Gen Z.

This research offers novelty by focusing its study on online gaming addiction behaviors among Gen Z, who possess unique characteristics in terms of adaptation to technology and social interaction patterns that are more integrated with the digital world. Unlike previous studies that have not highlighted the differences in the impact of online gaming on Gen Z compared to other generations, this research will conduct an in-depth analysis of online gaming addiction behaviors specifically among Gen Z, considering that they tend to be more vulnerable to addictive behaviors related to digital technology use. (Twenge, 2019). This research aims to bridge that gap by conducting a more in-depth analysis of this phenomenon.

This research will explore the issues related to the extent to which Gen Z's involvement in online gaming can be categorized as addictive behavior, as well as the factors that influence the level of addiction. This study is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of online gaming addiction among Gen Z and to identify the factors contributing to such behavior. The anticipated outcomes of this research include the development of more effective intervention strategies to address online gaming addiction among Gen Z, as well as providing new insights for academics and practitioners regarding the impact of digital technology on the mental and social health of this generation.

2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative research type, with a literature review method where the researcher collects various information related to the relevant research topic and also the results of previous studies from different sources. Snyder (Nurislaminingsih dkk., 2020) stating that the results of this literature review provide insights into the development of knowledge, serve as a source of inspiration in policy-making, encourage the emergence of new ideas, and function as a guide for research in specific fields. Researchers are looking for literature review materials in the form of scientific articles published within the last 10 years, specifically from the period 2015-2024. The data used in this study is secondary data, which is obtained from previous research results and the study materials to be examined, such as journals, articles, or relevant books, through database sites like Google Scholars/Garuda Kemendikbud/Elsevier Journal Finder.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here are some studies on online gaming addiction among Generation Z, which have both positive and negative impacts.

No	Author and Year of Publication	Informant	Method	Results
1	(Ulya dkk., 2021)	Children aged 11-13 years in elementary school in	Qualitative research with a phenomenological approach.	The impact of online game addiction can influence children's behavior to become more rebellious,

		Jondang Village, Kedung District, Jepara Regency.		aggressive, competitive, power-hungry, selfish, and less cooperative with each other, and less sympathetic. Social behavior in children who are addicted to online games will be more focused on their game, thus ignoring their surroundings.
2	(Salimah & Zukdi, 2020)	Students, homeroom teachers, and guidance counselors at SMP Negeri 12 Padang.	Field Research with a qualitative method.	Online game addiction affects various aspects of life, both social, psychological, and physical. Students who experience online game addiction cannot manage their time well, neglect tasks and responsibilities, have reduced social interaction, and exhibit unstable emotions, making them easily frustrated when they fail to complete challenges in the game. Students often neglect their physical health, resulting in weight loss and gain, injuries to the neck, back, spine, and wrists.
3	(Marwinda & Irman, 2022)	6 teenagers addicted to online games.	Qualitative descriptive field research with a phenomenological approach.	Teenagers who experience online game addiction undergo behavioral changes compared to before the addiction. These behavioral changes include becoming more emotional, developing an introverted personality, lacking self-control over the intensity of gaming, neglecting religious obligations, and socializing less, resulting in difficulty interacting with their surroundings.
4	(Dinata, 2017)	10 sociology students at Universitas Riau.	Descriptive research with a qualitative approach.	Students addicted to online games have been trying to reduce and stop their addiction to online games. However, this did not succeed; their efforts actually triggered negative behaviors such as rarely socializing with their surroundings, whether friends or relatives. Unstable mood swings,

				irritability, and depression are also forms of behavior caused when students try to reduce and stop their addiction.
5	(Kadir dkk., 2020)	3 pairs of parents who have children addicted to online games aged 10-15 years in the city of Palopo.	Qualitative research with a phenomenological approach.	Online game addiction in children can have both positive and negative impacts, depending on how the child responds to and utilizes it. The positive impacts include enhancing brain activity and increasing social relationships. The negative impact of online game addiction includes self-control disorders, inability to set proper priorities, strained relationships with friends and family, a more closed-off personality, and difficulty adapting to the surrounding environment.
6	(Mulyani & Fitriani, 2022)	3 teenagers aged 13-17 who are active players of the online game Mobile Legends.	Descriptive qualitative research.	Teenagers addicted to the online game Mobile Legends have unstable emotional conditions, which can trigger them to use harsh words, communicate poorly, exhibit aggressive behaviors such as fighting, committing violence, hitting objects around them, making loud noises towards those nearby, and showing excessive anger when they lose while playing.
7	(Dwizar & Nasution, 2024)	3 students who are experiencing online game addiction, the guidance counselor, and the homeroom teacher.	Descriptive qualitative research.	Students become less attentive to learning activities, experience a decline in physical health due to neglecting body care, have reduced social interactions, and lose track of time. Addictive behavior also leads students to choose to skip classes when lessons are in progress. Not only that, online game addiction disrupts daily activities, including academic performance and students' mental health.

8	(Masfiah & Putri, 2019)	2 boys and 1 girl aged 13-14 years at SMP Negeri 3 Padalarang, West Bandung Regency.	This research is a qualitative method with a descriptive research type that is case study-based.	A depiction of declining learning motivation caused by online game addiction, resulting in reduced study time. In fact, meal times and the way of communicating with family are also affected due to the gaming activities.
9	(Hamid & Arif, 2024)	5 students	Qualitative descriptive research with a case study approach.	Online game addiction can negatively impact various aspects of a student's daily life. Some of them include the inability to manage time well, neglecting responsibilities such as household chores, and lack of attention to family, friends, and religious activities. Online gaming addiction can also disrupt eating patterns, reduce social interactions, and lead to behaviors such as lying to continue playing. Additionally, playing online games can be an escape when facing difficulties in understanding lessons at school or feeling uninterested in the teacher's explanations.
10	(Kibtyah dkk., 2023)	Teenager addicted to online games	Descriptive qualitative approach with a case study research design.	Online game addiction has both positive and negative impacts on its users. On the positive side, playing online games can enhance technological skills, enrich English vocabulary, expand relationships, and train concentration. However, the negative impact is very significant, especially on physical and mental health. Online game addiction can cause physical disturbances such as fatigue, irregular eating and sleeping patterns. In addition, the impact on mental health is very serious, including anxiety, depression, emotional distress, changes in brain function, and a decline in academic abilities.

				Individuals who are addicted often lose self-control, become emotional, and experience social disturbances.
11.	(Sadif & Rasmi, 2023)	Students at SMPN 2 Baubau, parents, classmates of the subject, and the guidance counselor.	Qualitative descriptive research with a case study approach.	Online game addiction has a significant impact on the social, psychological, and physical aspects of students. This dependence causes them to often lose control over time, neglect tasks and responsibilities, and have less social interaction. In addition, the students' emotions become unstable and easily triggered when facing difficulties in the game. From a physical perspective, students addicted to online games are at risk of injuring body parts such as the neck, back, spine, and wrists. They also often experience weight loss due to forgetting to eat.
12.	(Zamaludin dkk, 2023)	6 students from the XI IPS 3 class, subject teachers, homeroom teacher, guidance counselor, parents, and close friends of students suspected of online game addiction at SMA AL Amanah Ciwidey.	Qualitative descriptive research with a case study approach..	Students who experience online game addiction have a negative impact on academic performance, learning motivation, as well as the physical and emotional health of students, such as frequently skipping school, being sleepy in class, and a lack of responsibility towards school assignments.
13	(Cahyana dkk, 2020)	3 middle school students at one of the middle schools located in the Cikalongwetan District, West Bandung Regency	Qualitative descriptive research	The behavior of online game addiction shows that students who play online games for 5 to 6 hours every day experience a decrease in learning motivation. They often get distracted while studying in class, feel sleepy, and even fall asleep during lessons. In addition, they often skip school because

				they wake up late due to staying up late playing games.
14	(Kurnia dkk., 2023)	5 high school students in Pematang Regency who play online games for at least 5 hours a day.	Qualitative descriptive research	This online game addiction is at a moderate level, but the subject still maintains a positive relationship with their social environment. Participation in various social activities, such as helping parents, mentoring, and scouting, shows a balance between playing games and social interaction.
15	(Salsa dkk., 2023)	4 students from public high schools/vocational schools in Garut	Qualitative research with a phenomenological approach	Online game addiction in teenagers can worsen stress, depression, and aggressive behavior, as well as cause difficulties in self-control. In addition, this addiction also disrupts interpersonal communication. Therefore, the importance of good communication between parents and children is essential to reduce those negative impacts..
16	(Alam dkk., 2022)	Children at the Gunggungan village junior high school	Qualitative descriptive research with a case study approach..	The impact of online games on the morality of children in Gunggungan village can be seen from changes in their behavior, such as the loss of the ability to prioritize daily activities, including studying at home. This also encourages dissociative behavior and makes children lazy in studying.
17	(Ingkiriwang dkk., 2021)	Teenagers aged 12 – 15 years and parents who have children addicted to the game PUBG.	Qualitative descriptive research	The positive impacts include enhancing teenagers' critical thinking and building teamwork, as well as improving their concentration and expanding their friendships. However, the negative impacts include making teenagers more hardened, aggressive, and emotional, which can trigger fighting behavior. In addition, there is a risk of damage to the eyes.

18	(Sitoresmi, 2022)	The teenage boy with the initials B sits in the first grade of junior high school.	Qualitative research using descriptive qualitative data analysis methods.	Teenagers who experience online game addiction exhibit behaviors such as inability to control themselves, preferring to be alone, ignoring their surroundings, wasting money on large amounts of internet data or phone credit, and showing uncontrolled emotions like shouting and using harsh language while playing games.
19	(Maharani dkk., 2020)	Students of SMK Bhina Karya Karanganyar.	Qualitative research	The behavior of online game addiction carries both positive and negative impacts. On the positive side, this addiction can enrich English vocabulary through interactions with global players, add new friends, enhance students' intelligence, and speed up decision-making. However, the negative impacts include decreased discipline and concentration, deteriorating health due to lack of rest, a quiet demeanor and reduced socialization, as well as excessive drowsiness that can lead to skipping school or other important activities.
20	(Hadisaputra dkk., 2022)	12 people who are middle and high school students, parents, teachers, and community leaders.	Qualitative descriptive research with a case study approach..	The phenomenon of online game addiction has influenced changes in the social behavior of teenagers. This is evident from the decline in teenagers' participation in helping their parents with gardening and the decrease in students' interest in studying. In addition, a new phenomenon has emerged where village teenagers are starting to learn how to do business online, such as buying and selling chips.

Based on the results of several journal studies on online gaming addiction behavior among Generation Z, the findings vary for each individual. According to Yee (Fitri et al., 2018), unhealthy behaviors that are difficult for the individual to stop or end can lead to negative impacts for both the individual and others. The behavior of online gaming addiction is discussed in the research by Cahyana et al. (2020) It shows that students play online games for 5 to 6 hours every day. The impact of these online games can be seen across all demographics, especially among teenagers. Ulya dkk. (2021), The impact of online game addiction on students greatly affects children's behavior in their development, making them more rebellious, aggressive, competitive, power-hungry, selfish, and less cooperative with other children, and lacking sympathy. The worst part is that children become insensitive to their surroundings.

Several studies on the negative impacts of online gaming addiction have been conducted at various educational levels, such as middle school and high school. The results indicate that students who are addicted to online games often neglect their physical health, have less time for socializing with peers, experience a decline in motivation to learn, communicate less with their families, struggle to understand lessons taught in school, waste time, show tendencies toward unstable mood changes, exhibit more aggressive behavior, experience changes in brain function, and suffer from depression.

Research in Harapan Village, Selayar Regency, and Sanrego Village, Bone Regency, conducted by Hadisaputra dkk., (2022) also stated that the phenomenon of online gaming is not only a problem for urban residents, but rural residents are also affected by online games. This is reflected in the decreasing participation of teenagers in helping their parents with gardening, as well as the declining interest in studying among students. Students are also not exempt from online gaming addiction, according to the research. Dinata (2017), Despite the many negative impacts of online games, they also have positive effects for teenagers, such as enhancing brain activity, increasing social connections, improving technological skills, enriching English vocabulary, and training concentration and focus.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on various research findings, online game addiction has a significant impact on the behavior of Generation Z, particularly among teenagers and students. The most commonly observed negative effects include behavioral changes that tend to be more aggressive, defiance, decreased motivation to learn, and physical and mental health issues. Individuals addicted to online games often spend excessive amounts of time playing, neglecting social interactions and academic activities. They are also prone to emotional disturbances such as depression, unstable mood swings, and reduced intensity of interactions with family and friends. Not only in urban areas, online game addiction has also spread to rural areas, as evidenced by the decreasing involvement of teenagers in

daily activities, such as helping their parents in the fields. Furthermore, dependence on online games also diminishes interest in learning and academic motivation among students. Although the negative impacts are clearly visible, online games can also provide positive benefits if played wisely. Some advantages that can be gained include improved technological skills, foreign language skills, especially in English, as well as the ability to enhance concentration and focus. Online games can also help expand virtual friendship networks and stimulate cognitive brain functions, which are beneficial for honing thinking skills.

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