

# Overcoming the Impact of Online Games through Literacy for Junior High School Students in South Tangerang City

Said Romadlan \*, Mukhlis Muhammad Maududi

Communication Studies Program, Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. HAMKA University, Jakarta, Indonesia.

\*Corresponding Author: [saidromadlan@uhamka.ac.id](mailto:saidromadlan@uhamka.ac.id)

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** A form of communication technology widely played today is an online game, which is a type of game that utilizes computer networks. However, this type of game can cause addictive effects in the long run, such as in the case of Islamic Junior High School students Raudlatul Hikmah, thereby leading to decreased learning performance. This research aims to provide online game literacy training, such as the development, characteristics, and forms of online gaming, regulation, ethics, and the effects of online games, and tips on overcoming them.

**Contribution:** This research contributes to students' understanding of the development characteristics and forms of online games, as well as the regulations, ethics, and their effects, to overcome its negative impacts.

**Method:** Methods applied include sharing experiences in using online games, presentations and discussions on its literacy, and questionnaire and guided group discussions on online game problems.

**Results:** The results showed that on the average, 82% of students understand the development, characteristics, and types of online games. Meanwhile, 96% understand its effects, while 85% have adequate knowledge of the tips needed to overcome the associated adverse effects.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, the objectives set by this training program can meet the target of providing online game literacy for Islamic Junior High School students Raudlatul Hikmah.

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology and all its excesses have led to several changes in all areas of life. This period is known as the era of disruption 4.0, which according to The Great Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), denotes evacuated from its roots.

Clayton Christensen popularized the term disruption in the context of determining the right strategies to organize a competition. Based on a day-to-day perspective, it is defined as a fundamental change rather than a challenge triggered by a technological revolution that targets all gaps in human endeavors. One of the main factors that cause disruption is digitalization. It converts various information from analog to digital format, making it easier to use.

In the field of communication, technological changes give birth to new forms of media that are entirely different from the conventional type. This includes internet-based media, technologies that provide convergence, digital networks, global reach, interactivity, and many-to-many communication, comprising producers and consumers [1]. New media refers to broad changes in media production, distribution, and usage, identified by digital, interactive, hypertextual, virtual, and simulation networks [2].

The impact of technological developments, including the essential new media, is the dependence of humans on the technology they created. Marshall McLuhan, a communication figure who initiated the theory of Technological Determinism, described technology as an extension or expansion of man. Its functions replaced that of the human limbs, which eventually led to the dependence on technology. Humans created games for convenience and to make life more accessible [3].

The existence of communication technology is increasingly relevant and aids in creating dependence during emergencies such as the current Covid-19 pandemic. It played an essential role in sustaining community activities during the implementation of the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). This includes Work and School From Home and information for medical purposes [4]. Communication technology played a significant role in the educational sector during the Covid-19 pandemic. It acts as a medium of interaction between educators and students in the implementation of online learning, including Distance Education (PJJ). Additionally, technology also facilitates the delivery of learning materials to ensure academic activities continue even though it is not conducted face-to-face. [5], [6]. There was also a tendency to increase online games as a form of entertainment and relaxation during the pandemic [7].

Online games are a form of communication technology that boosts dependence and is widely favored by various circles. This type of computer game utilizes an internet network, which is currently associated with the use of modems and cable connections. Online games are among the numerous internet contents, electronic publications, entertainment (podcasts), portals, and data search engines. It is also a form of entertainment, although these are highly interactive and bind many users together [8].

There are several types and forms of online games that children, teenagers, adults, and even parents love. The popular ones often played by many Indonesians are Mobile Legends, Bang Bang, Wormszone.io, PUBG Mobile, Among US, Hago, Free Fire, Call of Duty: Mobile, Minecraft Pocket Edition, Clash of Clans, and Candy Crush Saga [9]. However, several others are being played by various groups, but it has a negative impact in general, namely addiction. These online games have an addictive effect where the players spend many hours a day [8], [10]. One of the factors that cause it to be loved by numerous people is its "enjoyment" as an entertainment medium [11].

Online game addiction also impacts other aspects, such as failure at school, causes problems in families and relationships with friends [12], and the potential to spend money on internet cafes [13]. It also affects the health, psychological, academic, social, and financial aspects [14]. Therefore, to prevent the effects of addiction and other subsequent impacts, efforts are needed to anticipate them from the start, one of which is literacy in using these online games.

It is essential to create awareness and an understanding of its impact. This is because initially, most users are either not aware or do not realize that online games can be addictive. Literacy is associated with a person's ability to read and write [15]. It is also related to acquiring skills and knowledge to recite, interpret, and compose certain types of texts and artifacts and acquire relevant tools and intellectual capacity to participate in societal culture [16].

Additionally, a Community Partnership Program (PKM) activity was carried out in the form of online game literacy training for Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School (SMP) students, Pamulang, South Tangerang City. Based on the results of the interview held with the Principal of the Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, Mardhani Akbar, the majority of the problems faced are (1) a decrease in the learning achievement of some students because they spend too much time playing online games, (2) lack of caring behavior towards other students, teachers, and the environment because they are usually focused on these games, and (3) verbal violence and bullying behavior from some students who follow or imitate these games.

Therefore, this program aims to provide literacy training, such as (1) the development, characteristics, and forms of online games, (2) regulations, ethics, and impacts, including (3) overcoming the effects of online gaming. This study is expected to create awareness regarding the development, characteristics, and forms of online games, understanding its regulations, ethics, and impacts, especially addiction, and overcoming the effects and using it responsibly.

Previous studies related to efforts to overcome the impact of online games have been conducted. First, Eryzal Novrialdy carried out research on Online Game Addiction in Adolescents: Its Impact and Prevention. This study focused on the effects of online gaming, especially its impact and preventative efforts. This literature review concluded that online game addiction impacted adolescents' health, psychological, academic, social, and financial aspects [14]. Second, Arianto and Tuti Bahfiarti carried out research regarding Understanding the Impact of Online Games on Fishermen's Children in Makassar City. The results of this study indicate that online games can cause addiction, lack of focus in school, and the potential of students to spend lots of money in internet cafes [13]. Third, Abdu Zikrillah and friends studied the Perspective of Islamic Communication on Verbal Violence Behavior in Online Games, a Case Study of Mobile Legends Game: Bang Bang. It was further reported that verbal violence was often witnessed during this activity in the form of accusing and blaming, undermining, discounting, and name-calling [17].

Fourth, Said Romadlan and Dini Wahdiyati analyzed Preventive Efforts on Online Game Addiction in Early Childhood. The study results showed that parents understood the negative implication of these games on their children. They were also aware of specific tips for preventing and overcoming children's addiction to online games [18]. Fifth, Sri Wahyuni Adiningtiyas carried out a study on the Role of Teachers in Overcoming Online Game Addiction. It was reported that teachers' guidance and counseling overcame the adverse effects of online. This offers special treatment for students addicted to online games, including preventive, understanding, alleviation, and supervisory (advocacy) functions [19].

The difference between this research and previous ones lies in the objectives of the program and the methods adopted. The target is Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School students. Previous studies were targeted at teenagers, fishermen's children, early childhood, and the general public. Additionally, an online game literacy training program has never been carried out in this school. Furthermore, this research combined a series of methods, namely Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and questionnaires. On the other hand, previous studies employed literature and case studies.

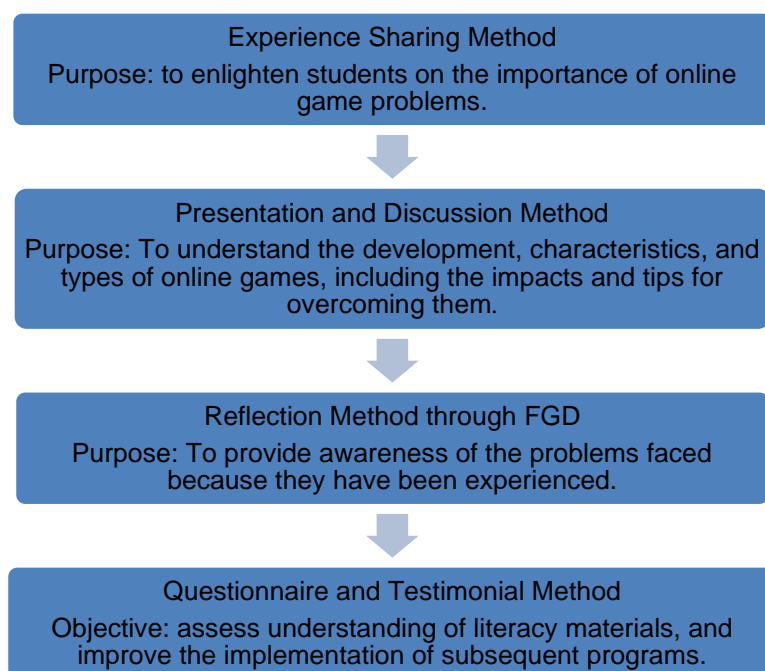
First, this study focuses on the impact of an online game literacy program for Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School students. Second, it aims to determine the tips for overcoming these effects. The aim is to create an awareness of online game literacy and provide an understanding of tips for overcoming its impacts on Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School students.

## **METHOD**

This study was conducted on 21 students of Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, Pamulang, South Tangerang City. Data collection methods include Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and questionnaires. Additionally, the FGD or Guided Discussion Group approach involves collecting data to understand the audience's attitudes [20]. In this study, FGDs were used to obtain data related to students' behavior towards online games, especially the problems encountered and tips for overcoming their negative impacts. Meanwhile, the questionnaire comprises a list of questions expected to be answered by the respondents. The aim is to obtain complete information or data regarding the research problems [21]. Therefore, the questionnaires were used to collect data related to students' understanding of the literacy materials, such as development, characteristics, and types of online games, including the effects and tips to overcome them.

First qualitative analysis was used to describe the results of FDG based on the focus of this study. Second, descriptive statistical analysis in a frequency distribution table was used to explain the students' level of understanding of online game literacy material.

Briefly, the implementation of this program is illustrated in the following flow chart:



**Figure 1.** Flowchart of Activity Implementation Method

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Online Game Literacy**

Based on the series of problems encountered, the objectives of PKM activities are, first, the provision of literacy training in the use of online games, including development, characteristics,

and forms. The second is creating awareness of its regulations, ethics, and impacts. The third is providing training on how to solve specific problems by reflecting on the students' respective experiences in using these games, especially in addressing and overcoming its negative impacts.

Based on these objectives, the output targets of this PKM activity are as follows. First, students can understand the development, characteristics, and forms of online games widely used. Second, they can understand the regulations, ethics, and the impacts, especially addiction. Third, students are able to overcome these impacts and can indulge in them responsibly.

To achieve these output targets, first, some materials about getting to know online games: its development, characteristics, and forms, were delivered by Andhika Pamungkas, S.Sos., M. Si., UHAMKA Communication Science lecturer as a resource person. Second, Dr. Said Romadlan, M.Sc., the Head of the PKM Implementation Team, delivered another material on tips for overcoming the effect of online games.



**Figure 2.** Implementation of Online Game Literacy Training by Community Service Implementation Team.

Based on the questionnaires distributed to the Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School students, the outcome of the materials is as follows.

### **Student Understanding of Development, Characteristics, and Types of Online Games**

Based on the results of the post-questionnaire obtained after the training session, the student's understanding of the development, characteristics, and types of online games was discerned. Regarding its development, 48%, 43%, and 9% were in the "understand," "completely understand," and "do not understand" categories. In terms of characteristics, as many as 62% were in the "understand" category, while the remaining 38% were in the "did not understand." In terms of popular types, approximately 76%, 19%, and 5% were in the "understand," "completely understand," and "don't understand" categories.

Based on the results of the post-questionnaire shown in table 1, an average of 82% of the students understood the development, characteristics, and types of online games. This simply implies that the output target of the training session was achieved, namely 80 to 85% of

Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School students understand the development, characteristics, and types of these games.

**Table 1.** Student Understanding of Development, Characteristics, and Types of Online Games (Online Games)

STATEMENT	RESPONSE			
	Really understand	Understand	Don't understand	Really Don't Understand
Development of online games (online games).	9 (43%)	10 (48%)	2 (9%)	0
Characteristics of online games (online games).	0	13 (62%)	8 (38%)	0
Types of online games (online games).	4 (19%)	16 (76%)	1 (5%)	0

**Student Understanding of the Impacts of Online Games**

Overall, based on the results of the post-questionnaire obtained after the training session, the student's perception of the impacts of online games was categorized as "understand" and "very understanding," in accordance with different percentage variations. Approximately 67% "understand" that these games could lead to addictions, 28% "completely understand," and only 5% "do not understand." Similarly, 62% and 38% of the students "understand" and "very understand" that online games lead to laziness, while none "don't understand" or "does not understand very well." Similarly, regarding their understanding that online games cause hallucinations and depression, 57% "understand," and 33% "very understand," while 10% "do not understand."

Relating that online games triggered closed and antisocial attitudes, 67%, 28%, and 5% were in the "understand," "very understand," and "did not understand" categories. In terms of the awareness that it can lead to crime and pornography, 80%, 10%, and 10% relatively "understand," "very understand," and "don't understand." Meanwhile, the majority are aware that online games can reduce learning achievement, virtually 76%, 24%, and none "understand," "completely understand," and "does not understand," let alone "does not understand very well." Similarly, it also causes health problems with 86%, 14%, and none relatively in the "understand," "completely understood," and "did not understand" or "did not understand very much" category.

Based on the results of the post-questionnaire shown in table 2 implies that, on average, 96% of the students understood the impacts of online games. This also shows that the output target for the literacy training session was successfully achieved. It even exceeded the mandatory target, between 80 to 85%.

**Table 2.** Participants' Understanding of the Impacts of Online Games (Online Games)

STATEMENT	RESPONSE			
	Really understand	Understand	Don't Understand	Really Don't Understand
Online games (online games) lead to addiction.	6 (28%)	14 (67%)	1 (5%)	0
Online games (online games) lead to laziness.	8 (38%)	13 (62%)	0	0
Online games (online games) cause hallucinations and depression.	7 (33%)	12 (57%)	2 (10%)	0
Online games (online games) lead to closed and antisocial attitudes.	6 (28%)	14 (67%)	1 (5%)	0
Online games (online games) lead to crime and pornography.	2 (10%)	17 (80%)	2 (10%)	0

Online games (online games) result in decreased learning achievement.	5 (24%)	16 (76%)	0	0
Online games (online games) cause health problems.	3 (14%)	18 (86%)	0	0

### Participants' Understanding of Tips for Overcoming the Impact of Online Games

Based on the results of the post-questionnaire obtained after the training session, it is evident that the students' understanding of tips for overcoming the effects of online games shows a slightly different trend from the other observations. Based on this, 57%, 14%, and 29% are in the "understand," "very understand," and "did not understand" categories on how to overcome the impact of online games. In terms of students' understanding of fairly playing these games, 95%, 5%, and none were in the "understand," "very understand," "did not understand," or "did not understand very well" categories.

From the results of the post-questionnaire shown in table 3, on the average, 85% of the students understood the tips for overcoming the impacts of online games, and this was included in the high category. This shows that the output target for this activity was successfully achieved. It exceeded the target, which is relatively between 75 to 80%.

**Table 3.** Participants' Understanding of Tips for Overcoming the Impact of Online Games (Online Games)

STATEMENT	RESPONSE			
	Really understand	Understand	Don't Understand	Really Don't Understand
How to overcome the impact of online games (online games)	3 (14%)	12 (57%)	6 (29%)	0
Can use online games (online games) fairly.	1 (5%)	20 (95%)	0	0



**Figure 3.** Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School Students take the Online Game Literacy Training

Previous studies reported that online games have the following impacts. First, its addiction in adolescents affects their health, psychological, academic, social, and financial aspects [14]. Second, online games can cause a lack of focus on learning activities and spending money in internet cafes [13]. Third, it triggers verbal abuse, such as accusing, blaming, undermining, discounting, and name-calling [17].

Furthermore, based on the results of the FGD, in which the training participants were divided into two groups, it was easier to identify the negative impacts that emerged from online games and tips to overcome them based on the students' experiences. The problems that emerged

include:

- a. Lazy to study. For teenagers, including most students, online games are certainly more attractive because they are fun rather than learning which is considered boring. As a result, they become lazy to study because their minds are only focused on playing online.
- b. Conflict with parents. Most of them ensure that their children do not spend much time playing online. On the contrary, these children don't like it when they are stopped from playing. This often leads to conflict between parents and their children.
- c. Baper. This refers to children addicted to online games, which are easily provoked or angered by trivial issues during the gaming process.
- d. Wasteful. Online games require a data package and a purchase (top-up) to access the internet. As a result, children spend more money purchasing data packages and top-ups.
- e. Messy use of time. Children often lose track of time, playing from early morning till late at night because these games are fun. Hence, they spend most of their time on online games without studying or helping their parents.
- f. Conflicts with friends and teachers. Competition or conflicts emerging from these games are sometimes unwittingly carried over to the real world. Friends become enemies, including teachers who are considered to limit these activities while at school. For example, the temporary confiscation of a student's device in order not to interfere with the learning process.
- g. Pornography and bullying. A lot of online game content contains pornography and verbal violence. This influences the students' attitudes and behaviors since they tend to imitate what is displayed in the online game.

Based on previous studies, parent-teacher warfare prevents children from becoming addicted to online games. Parents understand its negative impacts on their children. They also understand the relevant tips for preventing and overcoming their wards' addiction to online games [18]. In addition, guidance and counseling are needed in schools. It provides special treatment for students addicted to online games, including preventative, understanding, alleviation, and supervisory (advocacy) functions [19].

Meanwhile, based on the results of FGDs, the identified tips to overcome the impact of online games are as follows:

- a. Limit yourself. Playing online is not prohibited but is sometimes needed as a form of relaxation from the pressure of studying at school to avoid being stressed. Therefore, self-awareness is relevant, especially in terms of time management, related to studying, playing online games, and with friends, including other activities.
- b. Control from parents. Sometimes, children lose track of time while playing online games. Therefore parental control is required to ensure that they are not addicted. This includes adopting the mildest methods, such as advice, warnings, or reprimands, to severe ones, namely temporary confiscation of their devices to shock therapy.
- c. Guidance of Teachers and Ustadz. Parental control requires support from other parties to ensure that the children limit playing online games. Therefore, teachers and ustadz need to be involved in this control by providing guidance and insight about the benefits and dangers of this activity, especially when studying at school and reciting the Koran in the musholla or mosque.
- d. Increase offline activities. To avoid becoming addicted, children who play online games need to be diverted as often as possible to other offline activities. This includes sports, namely futsal, badminton, football, as well as traditional games such as playing fort, hide and seek, and gobak sodor.



- e. Avoid friends who are addicted to online games. These games are like infectious diseases, which are not known to children at the initial stage. However, because their friends are interested in online games, they become affected, maybe even worse. It is necessary to limit them if necessary to ensure they avoid friends who are addicted to these games.

### **Online Games and Mabar Culture (Play Together)**

As a form of entertainment, online games have a high level of interactivity which can bind a large number of users together compared to other types [8]. In addition, another factor that causes it to be favored by various groups is its "enjoyment" medium [11].

Interactivity is one of the important characteristics of digital, hypertextual, virtual, and simulation networks of online games, which is perceived as a form of new media [2]. Although players of online games do, enjoyment is directly sought and obtained by the users. In the long term, this effect can turn into an addiction, causing users to play continuously for a long time because it is fun. The domino effect is based on the fact that the excitement and fun cannot be fulfilled due to prohibition or restriction by parents or lack of money to access data packages and top-ups. Therefore, addicted users lie to their parents or even indulge in criminal acts such as theft, fraud, and robbery.

Additionally, online games have the following adverse impacts namely failure at school, problems in their relationships with family and friends [12], lack of focus in learning activities, and the potential to spend money in internet cafes [13], including affecting their health, psychological, academic, social and financial aspects [14], this online game also led to the emergence of Mabar culture, which stands for "playing together." Initially, this term was used among Mobile Legend (ML) fans to invite some individuals to play ML together. However, with respect to its development, the term Mabar was then widely used to invite people to participate in other online games such as PUBG, Among Us, Uno, etc.

In a layman's language, playing together in the real world implies that the players are socially present, and of course, there is physical contact (haptics) between them. For example, when playing football, hide-and-seek, forts, and other activities are performed either simultaneously or together. However, the context of gamers playing together, abbreviated as Mabar, has different meanings and actions. It is an invitation to play online games together, where three to five or more people play together using their respective devices. This can be performed close together and in groups in a particular place or far from each other with unfamiliar people.

The term Mabar in the context of linguistic studies, is a phenomenon of slang and code-mixing in daily language usage. As slang, it is a contraction of the phrase play together. Slang is often used, especially among children and adolescents, in pronouns, such as *l*, which is the word *gua*. It is also used in the absorption form, such as the word *epersonalh*, which comes from the English absorption of the word everybody, the form of beheading, such as the word *gosah* decapitation from the word *ga* need or not. This forms acronyms, such as the word *OTW* which means On The Way, and inversion forms, such as the word *kuy* from "yuk" and *yoi* from "yes" [22]. In language studies, Mabar is a form of acronym that simply means playing together, and it commensurates with *Mukil* (face killer) [23]. Meanwhile, as a mixed code, it shows the limitations of using matched languages such as eating, watching movies, traveling, eating snacks together, etc [24].

The current Mabar phenomenon, which is widespread and symptomatic in many circles, makes it not just a routine for online game users, rather can be called a culture. This is inseparable from efforts to derive pleasure (enjoyment) in playing online games. The word enjoyment is derived from the root word 'joy'. It is an enticing feeling that leads to the radiation

of joy, laughter, or pleasure. Some scientists consider it a complex concept related to experience. Although, this is not only conceptualized as happy, but pleasure derived from tranquility, tension, achievement etc. Therefore, the enjoyment derived from the entertainment media, such as online games, is considered as the outcome of a number of antecedent conditions which include users' tension from distrust, and empathy, motives, such as escapism, and competition, as well as media prerequisites consisting of aesthetics, and technology [11].

Finally, in Mabar cultural context, the presence of online games cannot always be seen from the negative side. Rather it also has a positive function that brings about pleasure and relieves one from boredom and stress. This is, of course, performed reasonably and not excessively. Even in its recent development, various online games and e-sports have begun to compete [25], [26]. Currently, e-sports has become one of the millennial era sporting activities [27]. This simply implies that with its development, online games at a certain point can even bring about achievements and lucrative income in the future.



**Figure 4.** Community Service Implementation Team, Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School Principal, and Students Participating in Online Game Literacy Training.

## **CONCLUSION**

This online game literacy training for Raudlatul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School students provides certain benefits related to their understanding of the development, characteristics, and current types. Additionally, these students also tend to understand the negative impacts such as addiction, depression, hallucinations, closure, decreased learning achievement, and even pornography and crime. On the other hand, they can overcome these effects by using online games responsibly. Additionally, based on the FGDs, problems that emerged as a result of online games can also be identified, as well as efforts to overcome them based on the students' personal experiences. These include (a) lazy to study, (b) conflict with parents, (c) baper, easily emotional or angry, (d) wasteful, (e) inappropriate use of time, (f) conflicts with friends and teachers, as well as (g) pornography and bullying. Meanwhile, tips for overcoming the impact of online games include: (a) limiting oneself, (b) controlled by parents, (c) guidance from academic

and religious teachers, (d) increasing offline activities, and (e) avoiding friends addicted to online games.

The online game that gave birth to Mabar culture is an interplay between the entertainment media industry and users' needs in the form of enjoyment. This further diverts the negative effects because it functions as entertainment, relaxation, and even achievement.

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