



Scientia Psychiatrica

Journal Homepage: www.scientiapsychiatrica.com

eISSN (Online): 2715-9736

Do Online Games Affect the Quality of Attachment Between Adolescents and Parents?

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Adolescent
Smartphone
Addictive behaviour
Video games
Impulse control disorders

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All authors have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

<https://doi.org/10.37275/scipsy.v1i4.25>

ABSTRACT

Online games are games using machines based on internet networks so that they can interact between players and can be accessed either via computers, console games or smartphones. This game is top-rated not only apart from the challenges that exist in the game, as well as the interaction with other players, so it resembles real life. Ease of access and fun games cause online game users to take more and more time to play online games. This behaviour makes online game users neglect their daily activities and reduce interaction with the real world. Adolescence is an age that is prone to addiction to online games due to various factors. The attachment of parents and adolescents is allegedly able to play a role as a preventive factor and symptom improvement in online gaming disorder in adolescence.

1. Introduction

Online games are a type of game that can be accessed using a computer and take advantage of a network connection. Online games were first introduced in Indonesia in 2001 and have experienced rapid development. Based on the results of a survey conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in 2014, it was recorded that 10% of internet users in Indonesia used internet access for online games.^{1,2}

The widespread use of online games in various circles has left quite a broad impact. Fun entertainment causes online game users to take more and more time to play online games. This behaviour makes online game users ignore other activities such as socializing, studying, working, sports and other social activities. Teenagers, as the majority of users in online games, are a group that is quite vulnerable to mental disorders due to gaming disorders. This

literature review will discuss the effect of online games on the quality of attachment between adolescents and parents.³

2. Interference Due to Use of Online Games (Internet Game Disorder)

Sulistyo et al. define online games as games that are created to interact between players via the internet network.^{2,3} A study states that online games are games that can be accessed by many players, where an internet network connects the machines used by the players.³ Meanwhile, another study states that online games are games using a network connection that can be accessed via computers, online console games or smartphones. Through the three definitions above, it can be concluded that online games are games using internet-based machines so that they can interact between players and can be accessed either

via computers, console games or smartphones. This game is viral apart from the challenges that exist in the game, and the interaction with other players so that it resembles real life.

The widespread use of online games in various circles has left quite a broad impact. Fun entertainment causes online game users to take more and more time to play online games. This behaviour makes online game users ignore other activities such as socializing, studying, working, and sports. Despite knowing the disadvantages caused by the excessive use of online games, users are unable to control their desire always to play online games. This situation is similar to the symptoms of "dependency like syndrome" in drug addicts. Regarding the problems that arise, the researchers in their studies have come up with several terminologies that refer to this phenomenon, such as problematic game use, problematic gaming, pathological gaming, online game addiction, compulsive internet game use, internet game disorder. DSM-5, in this case, puts gaming disorder into the category of behavioural addiction, equivalent to other compulsions of behaviour such as gambling, overeating, sexual activities, exercise, work, and shopping.^{1,3}

3. Adolescent-Parent Relationship

Parents are an essential factor in the development of a child, so that later in adolescence, they can become healthy individuals in overcoming adolescent development tasks. Apart from being a distal factor that shapes the character of a teenager, the closeness of the relationship between adolescents and parents provides opportunities for adolescents to feel comfortable in sharing the problems they face and get support from their parents in solving their problems. It can keep a teenager from the tendency of online game addiction, which is usually done by teenagers to escape from their life problems.

John Bowlby originally coined the term attachment. Attachment or is a deep and reciprocal emotional bond between the baby and the caregiver. Malekpour said that attachment is an emotional bond

that is formed between a baby and its caregiver, and this relationship will last long enough in the span of human life.⁴ This understanding is in line with what Johnson et al. Stated, which states that attachment is an emotional bond that a distinctive form with another that is specific and binds them in an eternal closeness over time. Bowlby argues that the behaviour to maintain closeness with someone who is considered capable of protecting from environmental threats, especially when someone feels afraid, sick, and threatened is called attachment behaviour. This attachment behaviour is shown through the behaviour of the child crying, approaching, seeking contact and trying to maintain contact with the attached figure when the child is looking for comfort or security.^{5,6}

The attachment provides a survival benefit for babies, protects from harm by keeping them close to their primary caregiver. Attachment makes a baby feel comfortable to explore his environment. If the baby feels separated, it threatens his well-being. Therefore, babies try to stay near the caregiver. Based on the description above, attachment is a reliable and permanent emotional bond that children develop through their interactions with caregivers so that they can protect and encourage their subsequent development in an adaptive manner.

4. The Role of Quality of Teen-Parent Relationships in Online Gaming Disturbance

The quality of the relationship is closely related to the social competence a person has. An infant learns this social competence from the results of interactions with caregivers that form a pattern of attachment. The attachment patterns that are owned as a baby will form an internal working model as a basis for someone to build social relationships in the future. During its development, a person's ability to build relationships is divided into secure and insecure. The ease of virtual communication in online games provides an opportunity for someone with an insecure attachment to solve social competency problems in the real world. A person with anxious attachment uses online games to get out of real-world difficulties and

uses virtual life via the internet (online) to provide a sense of security by forming personal character and fulfilling his need for relationship competence.⁷

Someone with avoidant attachment also feels comfortable in using online games because they can get out of social life, and can limit communication, intimacy and openness to personal things when playing online games.^{8,9} These were following research by Kim in 2015 which examined online game addiction with parental attachment to adolescents, where the results were that the better the attachment pattern with parents, the lower the tendency for online game addiction.¹⁰

The size of the role of parents is not limited to the formation of attachment patterns that underlie one's social competence. In the study of Han et al., four weeks of family therapy were carried out in adolescents with online game addiction.¹¹⁻¹² In order to determine the effect of family therapy, brain activity was recorded before and after therapy. The results showed that there were differences in brain activity before and after therapy in the caudate nucleus when affection stimulation from parents and activity differences in the prefrontal cortex on stimulation of online games. The existence of this family therapy has also shown a reduction in the length of time playing online games.¹³⁻¹⁵

Other studies have shown similar results, among others, linking online gaming behaviour with high levels of conflict with parents, parenting authority, poor parental relationships, low family functioning, low family satisfaction and less parental supervision. Some of the studies above show that parents have an essential role in the prevention, therapy and prognosis of disorders caused by online games.¹⁶⁻¹⁷

5. Conclusion

The quality of good relationships between adolescents and parents is an essential factor that can be used in the prevention, therapy and prognosis of disorders caused by online games experienced by adolescents.

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