

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Is playing online games associated to students' emotional intelligence?



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ABSTRACT

The emergence of emotional intelligence in students amidst the rampant trend of playing online games has both positive and negative impacts. This study examines the relationship between the level of involvement in online games and students' emotional intelligence. The research design is correlational, utilizing an accidental sampling technique with a total sample of 169 students from Salatiga. Data was collected using the Emotional Intelligence Scale and an instrument for online game playing intensity. The data analysis method employed was descriptive analysis using the instruments of online game-playing intensity and emotional intelligence as primary data in this study. The results indicate no significant relationship between online game-playing intensity and emotional intelligence. This suggests that the intensity of playing online games does not influence emotional intelligence.

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INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, emotions are an integral component inseparable from all human endeavors, playing a significant role in self-development processes and interactions. In the context of social relationships and adapting to others, emotions within an individual can influence how they position themselves and their ability to discern the emotions of others. As defined by Goleman (2001), emotional intelligence pertains to an individual's capacity to effectively manage their emotional experiences by maintaining emotional consistency and articulation through talent, utilizing their cognitive abilities, self-awareness, self-discipline, self-engagement, empathy, and interpersonal competence.

Understanding the emotional intelligence present in adolescents is crucial. Adolescents with high emotional intelligence can present a positive image of themselves, express their emotions effectively, control their feelings, and manifest emotional reactions corresponding to the situations experienced. This enables adolescents to adapt to their circumstances and navigate their environment effectively. According to Mayer (1999), one of the many benefits of emotional intelligence is its function as a self-regulation instrument, preventing individuals from engaging in detrimental or self-destructive

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behaviors that may cause harm to themselves or others. Effective marketing or expanding ideas and concepts can also leverage well-applied emotional intelligence.

As described by Goleman (2001), emotional intelligence is susceptible to the influence of two environmental factors: family and non-family factors. The family environment is the primary and most essential setting for teaching emotional management skills; infants can begin learning these skills within the family unit.

The survey data from the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers (2020) indicates that internet facilities most frequently used are social media at 51.5%, messaging at 29.3%, and online gaming at 21.75%. As defined by Rollings & Adams (2003), online gaming involves technology rather than a specific game genre, utilizing player connection mechanisms rather than adhering to particular game models. Easy access to online gaming enables adolescents to play games effortlessly anytime and anywhere, disregarding other activities. Consequently, this condition may lead individuals to engage in repetitive activities. Hence, everything done repeatedly is referred to as intensity. In this context, intensity refers to how often an individual engages in repetitive online gaming. Griffiths et al. (2004) expound that gaming intensity is the average hours a person spends playing games per week. Hidayati (2014) asserts that intensity refers to continuous activity in online gaming over a sufficient duration.

According to Harsono's research (2014), online games can have several positive impacts, such as serving as a learning tool, enhancing language skills, fostering resilience, stimulating inquiry, facilitating problem-solving, encouraging imaginative thinking, broadening perspectives, nurturing ambition and generating income from gaming. Fundamentally, online games are beneficial for users. However, alongside its positive aspects, there are also negative impacts on users. Hapiyansyah (2023) identifies negative effects in terms of psychological implications, including reduced focus, tendencies towards violence, aggressive behavior, and negativity in emotions.

In supporting this research, references to previous studies are essential. Apriliyani (2020) found a significant negative relationship between the intensity of online gaming and emotional intelligence. It can be argued that emotional intelligence is greater when online gaming intensity is minimal (Pratama, 2020). Consistent with prior investigations, this study showed substantial improvement in emotional intelligence among participants. Similar research by Kessler et al. (2019) indicates that the use of games can decrease social engagement, as gaming media may be perceived as a substitute for direct involvement in the contemporary world. This is because gaming media can be seen as an alternative to active engagement in the modern world. Some children addicted to online video games exhibit psychological conditions that can have negative implications for children's mental health, such as delinquent behavior and violence (Brian, 2005).

Researchers identified, through the phenomenon, that several students exhibited low levels of emotional intelligence. Subsequently, researchers became highly interested in re-examining emotional intelligence within the realm of Vocational High School (SMK) students. The underlying reason for the research conducted in SMK was the discovery of indications that SMK students face an issue related to emotional intelligence. This observation was reinforced by research findings indicating that SMK students' emotional intelligence is lower than in other educational institutions, including high schools (Khasanah, 2018).

In Islam, emotional intelligence is an absolute value inherent in individuals from birth. Hamdan (2017), in his study on emotional intelligence among individuals memorizing the Qur'an, followed by the *hafiz* since adolescence, emphasizes the importance of maintaining behavior in line with religious

principles and avoiding frivolous activities (*lahwu*). This encouragement leads to developing their emotional intelligence without engaging in futile activities such as online gaming.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative or statistical method to test hypotheses. The quantitative method refers to data collection through research instruments and investigation of a specific population or sample (Sugiyono, 2012). The sample used in this study consisted of 169 vocational high school students in Salatiga selected through an accidental sampling technique. This method involves selecting samples encountered by chance that the researcher can use as samples; in other words, individuals encountered by the researcher who fit certain criteria can be utilized as data sources (Sugiyono, 2016). The initial stage undertaken by the researcher involved identifying students who engage in online gaming. Subsequently, the researcher distributed emotional intelligence and online gaming intensity scales within the classroom. Respondents in this study (see Table 1) were aged between 16-19 years, with 81.7% male and 18.3% female participants. The final step involved analyzing the collected data processed using SPSS version 26.

The instrument used to measure emotional intelligence, adapted from Goleman (1995), comprised 50 items covering 5 aspects: self-awareness of emotions, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Example item 1: "I am less sensitive in recognizing the emotions I am experiencing." The questionnaire in this study was designed using the Likert scale model with five response options, ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Somewhat Disagree (SD), Agree (A), to Strongly Agree (SA).

The instrument utilized to measure online gaming intensity was adapted from Kartini (2016) and contained 23 items encompassing quantity and activity aspects. Example item 1: "I spend time playing online games during holidays." The questionnaire for this research will adopt the Likert scale with four response categories: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Analysis involved normality tests to determine whether the data exhibited a normal distribution. Linearity tests were performed to ascertain the linear relationship between variables. Correlation tests were conducted using SPSS 26 to explore the relationship between the two variables.

RESULT

Table 1. The demographics of research participants

| Category | n (%) |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Gender | |
| Male | 138 (81.7%) |
| Female | 31 (18.3%) |
| Age (year) | |
| 15 | 2 (1.2%) |
| 16 | 72 (42.5%) |
| 17 | 82 (48.5%) |
| 18 | 11 (6.5%) |
| 19 | 2 (1.2%) |
| Major | |
| XI TPM A | 29 (17.2%) |
| XI DPIB B | 27 (16.0%) |
| XI TAV A | 15 (8.9%) |
| XI TEI A | 19 (11.2%) |
| XI TEI B | 20 (11.8%) |
| XI TEI C | 12 (7.1%) |

This study aims to analyze the influence of emotional intelligence on gaming intensity. Table 1 presents participants' demographic data, indicating that 81.7% of the participants in this study were male and 28.3% were female.

Table 2. Normality test

| Mean | Std. deviation | p |
|----------|----------------|-------|
| .0000000 | 8.33372416 | 0.200 |

Table 2 utilizes the Normality Test employing the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test technique. This Normality Test is conducted to ascertain whether this study's data distribution is normal. Data is normally distributed if the significance value $p > 0.05$. Based on the data table above, it can be interpreted that the significance value of the normality test is $0.200 > 0.05$, indicating that the data is normally distributed when $p > 0.05$. Therefore, the data is normally distributed.

Table 3 employs linear regression analysis to obtain significant results regarding online game-playing intensity and emotional intelligence. In this linearity test, data can be considered linear when the significance value is $p > 0.05$. Consequently, it is concluded that online game-playing intensity and emotional intelligence can be deemed linear.

Table 3. Linearity test

| | df | F | p |
|-----|----|-------|-------|
| X→Y | 28 | 1.200 | 0.242 |

Table 4 employs hypothesis testing to examine the presence or absence of a relationship between the two variables using the Pearson product-moment correlation test.

Table 2. Hypothesis test

| | r | p |
|-----|-------|-------|
| X-Y | -.035 | 0.652 |

DISCUSSION

This study aims to examine the influence of emotional intelligence on the intensity of online gambling. The research results indicate that emotional intelligence has no significant impact on the intensity of online gaming. These findings confirm the results of a previous study conducted by Remy et al. (2022), which found no significant correlation between the intensity displayed during online gaming and teenage emotional intelligence.

The contribution of Islamic perspectives on emotional intelligence supports this research. Nisa et al. (2021) revealed that emotional intelligence involves gaming habits and can also be developed through a harmonious family setting that strengthens faith among family members, practices patience, and draws closer to their Creator. In another study, within the Islamic understanding, the emotional intelligence dimension is known as the *muraqabah* and *muhassabah* processes. *Muraqabah* is a process within oneself that involves keenly observing one's actions. This is based on the Quranic verse An-Nisaa [4]: 1, which states: "Indeed, Allah is ever watchful over you." The Prophet advised that Muslims should always watch over their actions, as narrated by Abu Nu'aim: "Worship Allah as though you see Him, for even if you do not see Him, surely He sees you." Thus, when an individual is conscious of the presence of their Creator, they will always control their emotions to do good and refrain from futile actions.

Other supporting studies include research conducted by Parman and Pakaya (2022), which indicates a negative relationship between emotional intelligence and the intensity of online gaming. This suggests that as students' emotional intelligence decreases, their online gaming intensity

increases. Pratama (2020) found in their study that high levels of online gaming intensity can lead to low academic performance. Furthermore, another corroborating study by Rohman and Saeh (2024) shows a correlation between online gaming intensity and emotional intelligence, indicating that higher levels of online gaming intensity correspond to lower levels of emotional intelligence. Conversely, lower online gaming intensity levels are associated with higher emotional intelligence.

Within this study, the researchers identified several weaknesses in the research process. Firstly, the sample used represented only one class level, therefore only partially capturing the total number of students in the research location. Secondly, the researchers needed help ensuring student engagement in completing tasks diligently, resulting in suboptimal performance from some students. Lastly, during data collection, the researchers faced challenges monitoring students as they filled out the data, leading to some students engaging in other distracting activities.

CONCLUSION

The study investigating the relationship between students' involvement in online gaming and their emotional intelligence in Salatiga concludes that there is no significant correlation between the frequency of online gaming and different facets of emotional intelligence among students. Nevertheless, it is noted that students who regularly participate in online gaming demonstrate diverse emotional intelligence levels, which appear to be influenced by the nature and duration of the games. Research limitations may include a restricted sample size and a narrow focus on a specific location. The implications for the field of psychology suggest the necessity for further research involving larger and more diverse samples, as well as additional exploration of other potential factors influencing the link between online gaming and emotional intelligence. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

DECLARATION

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Author contribution statement

Syehans Fahsadila contributed to conducting research design, collecting data, processing data, and writing the manuscript. Doddy Hendro Wibowo guided and approved research development, supervised data collection, and reviewed the manuscript's results.

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Data access statement

The data described in this article can be obtained by requesting the author for acceptable and reasonable reasons.

Declaration of Interest's statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Additional information

No additional information is available for this article.

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