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ABSTRACT

Addiction to online gaming is a sub type of Internet addiction disorder. The development and recognition of Internet (online) games in modern life inevitably comes with mixed impacts. Islam sees this as a call to increase people's awareness and to help them deal with the negative impacts of technologies. Islam has also ordered us to act with moderation and balance and to commit no excess. There are three behaviors that are considered in the way Islam views the phenomenon, i.e. excessive self-indulgence, negligence and following evil desires. They are thought to have underlain the development of online gaming addiction.
Keywords: Contributing factors, online gaming, an Islamic perspective

1. INTRODUCTION

Scientific and technological progress has created numerous inventions designed to address human needs in various fields, such as education, sciences, health, transportation, or entertainment. This is achieved by virtue of human creativity, which continuously grows and opens the door to new technological innovations highly valuable to people's wellbeing [11].

Such progress also entails a rapid growth in information and communication technology, in which most people has the freedom to access much information via the Internet. This freedom, consequently, requires any one to carefully filter out anything that appears on their screen as the Internet provides them not only with virtually any kind of information but also a wide range of entertainments and diversions, including online games. However, today's online games differ greatly from those first introduced many decades ago. In 1960, computers could only accommodate two people during a gaming session. Time sharing-enabled computers were then developed to create space for more players so they were able to play a game without being physically in the same room, hence paving the way for online multiplayer gaming.

In 1970, the advent of packet-based computer networking technology had expanded LAN into WAN and further down the road initiated the Internet. The first online games were mostly war or flight simulators originally used for military purpose. They were later released commercially and inspired the development of other games. Aradhana Gupta in his article suggests that in 1995, the National Science Foundation Network (NSFNET) revoked the established rules in game industry which led to an auspicious revolution in online gaming [5].

It can be argued that fast-growing technologies inevitably coexist with their mixed impacts. Technological advancements unquestionably make human life much easier, but at the same time can drive people into indolence. Islam views these changes as a call to increase people's awareness and to help them deal with the negative impacts of technologies. Furthermore, Islam has ordered us to act with moderation and balance and to commit no excess in anything, including in everyday use of technologies.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Online Gaming Addiction

Human behavior can be perceived from two perspectives: their basic or general behavior as living organisms and their behavior as social beings. Human behavior in a broad sense is different from that in a social sense. Basic behavior is a biological response to either external or internal stimuli, driven by a series of activities in the living organism system, particularly those related to the effects of

or the responses to stimuli.Social behavior, on the other hand, is described as specific behavior addressed to other individuals.The way people respond to others' behaviors is subject to the existing social norms and multiple measures of social control.

Online gaming addiction is recognized as a sub type of Internet addiction disorder. When someone has an unhealthy online gaming habit, they will gradually develop excessive play and frequent preoccupation with gaming. Online game addicts seek emotional pleasure by spending most of their time playing games instead of having real-world social interactions. When they are prevented from gaming, they may feel depressed or lonely. People struggling with online gaming addiction may also have problems associated with social life, school achievement,and job performance [11].

Instead of addressing life's obstacles, tackling daily stress and confronting past or present traumas, a typical addict responds to pain by resorting to a pseudo-coping mechanism. Coping mechanisms are the processes by which individuals are trying to manage stressful situations caused by the problems they are facing. Coping mechanisms involve cognitive and behavioral changes to achieve self-security.

Addiction symptoms manifest both physically and psychologically. Physical addiction is related to the development of dependence on certain substances or activities after sudden discontinuation. Despite giving pleasure in the beginning, consuming the substances or doing the activities will eventually create an urge to eliminate anxiety triggered by the discontinuation, which in turn results in compulsive behavior. Compulsive behavior is defined as performing an irrational act persistently and repetitively [3]; it is a psychomotor disorder in which an individual feels a repetitive impulse or compulsion, in spite of disinclination, to do something against one's own normal intention or the existing customs and norms [12]. Psychological addiction, on the other hand, occurs when an addict experiences the symptoms of withdrawal, depression, anxiety, distress, insomnia, and irritability.

Many people in fact suffer from addictive behavior. Addicts find themselves unable to control the frequency of originally harmless acts such as sex, work, using the Internet, online chatting, shopping, or sports. Many types of addiction are rooted in impulse-control disorder (ICD), which also includes problems linked to consumption-induced tolerance, withdrawal, repetitive failure to cut backor discontinue addictive behavior, and reduction in everyday life functioning [7].

Addiction to online gaming specifically may be set off by several factors, such as rewards received as the game progresses, interpersonal relationships developed among players, and engaging and immersive environment rendered by the game. The game frequently rewards the player for minimal effort in the early stages of gameplay with faster leveling up, more experience points, and new equipment.However, it gradually increases the amount of time and effort that is necessary to receive a reward or to upgrade the player's level as the game progresses.

Commonly, the player also craves superior or fancier in-game items that other players have acquired after reaching certain levels or completing specific quests. At this point, the player is already "hooked", inclined to level up faster by playing much longer [2], or widely known as "grinding".

Hardcore gamers are likely to spend 16 to 20 hours per day playing games. Research has shown that spending too much time playing games may have a negative impact on school achievement and playing online games can profoundly affect children's intelligence development both positively and negatively [14].Excessive online gaming can also negatively affect the behavior of adolescents, which may lead to social deviance. For example, younger game addicts are prone to develop a habit of lying, which results from the fact that they are still in school and financially rely on their parents. If they are straightforwardly telling their parents that they need some money for online gaming, chances are they will not get any. Therefore, many younger game addicts resort to lies and manipulations.Another effect is that online gaming addiction can also cause indolence and procrastination among adolescents, crippling their effort to carry out a task.Unfortunately, addicts may not recognize the impacts of these behavioral changes among themselves, but others around them most probably do, particularly their own parents [1].

Teenagers usually apply peer group standards as the bases for an "ideal" personality. However, most of them may feel that they are unable to reach those perceived standards of idealism nor to change their own personality. Thus, finding one's own identity, keeping in touch with social environment, and keeping up a healthy self-concept are essential in adolescent development.

There are at least four circumstances considered integral to adolescent social development: self-identity develops during this stage, parent-adolescent closeness will affect self-reliance, independence and social relationships, peer interactions have major impact primarily on the development of interpersonal relationships and group acceptance, and social environment helps to shape personality and encourage healthy social development [6]. Such factors as genes, intelligence, emotion, attitudes, cultures, ethic, authority, relationships, and persuasion are also believed to have contributed to an individual's behavior[13].

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. Contributing Factors in Online Gaming Addiction among Adolescents

Stress and pressures in teenagers' everyday life may potentially set off Internet addiction. Most of them have not had sufficient capacity to manage stress and pressures properly, so they try to find any possible diversion to deal with their anxiety. Teenagers generally turn to the Internet

to help themselves tackle depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive behavior, sociophobia, guilt, loneliness, family conflict, and other life problems. However, instead of making the situations better, avoidance will only exacerbate those problems and make it more difficult for them to hold on and control excessive online activities [9]. There are at least five factors associated with adolescent Internet addiction, which include:

1. *The addict's preference for or inclination to being online.* Internet addicts generally feel a sense of more comfort, greater self-confidence, better treatment from others, and safety when they are having online interactions. They rarely enjoy these feelings in the offline world.

2. Poorly-managed Internet use. Many adolescents become more and more obsessed with online interactions to seek fulfillment. They tend to feel isolated, anxious, depressed, and irritable when they are Internet-deprived. They are also very likely to be secretive about their heavy Internet use.

3. *The tendency to lose track of time.* Internet addicts habitually spend an unreasonable amount of time online and fail to address more important things in their everyday life.

4. *Negative educational, career, social and emotional consequences, as well as a feeling of worthlessness when being offline.* Internet addiction can trigger adverse effects when the compulsion to go online is not addressed.

5. *Withdrawal.* Internet addicts will have recourse to the Internet to communicate with others when they are feeling isolated and lonely or losing their self-confidence [8].

Adolescents are disposed to Internet addiction due to the gravity of the Internet itself as a medium for gaining popularity and for easier access to a considerable number of entertainments and diversions. They are frequently unable to control their enthusiasm for compelling things like online games, which may ultimately evolve into pathological Internet use. Seeking refuge in virtual worlds to constantly avoid the real life is likely to be linked to serious everyday problems among adolescents [10].

A number of factors are believed to have contributed to increased addiction to online gaming among adolescents:

- *Lack of attention from parents.* Teenagers want to feel valued and appreciated; they will feel content if they get the attention they need from their closest family members, particularly both parents. When they are deprived of attention,

they most probably turn to negative behavior as a means of reclaiming it.

- *Stress and depression.* Some teenagers use Internet gaming for its recreational purpose to relieve stress and depression. However, they are mostly unaware that this commonly leads to addiction.

- *Lack of parental restriction.* Teenagers heavily spoiled by their parents have a high risk of online gaming addiction. Giving them the resources to play games online without any restrictions will lead to excessive play and obsession with gaming.

- *Too much unproductive time.* Spending time doing nothing is not something enjoyable for anyone, including teenagers. Many teenagers pass their idle time playing online games to relieve the boredom. Nevertheless, this kind of habit may extend to studying time and sleeping time.

- *Social environment.* Adolescent behavior is influenced not only by family members but also by the social environment, including peer pressure. Although most adolescents are not introduced to online gaming at home, they are at times still exposed to it through their friends in school.

- *Parenting patterns.* Parenting patterns have profound effects on adolescent behavior. As a consequence, parents have to be aware of the way they raise their children since early childhood. Unsuitable parenting patterns may negatively affect children's behavior until later in life [11].

3.2. Online Gaming Addiction from an Islamic Perspective

With regard to online gaming addiction, Islam takes into account three behaviors that underlie the development of such addiction, i.e. excessive self-indulgence, negligence or heedlessness, and following evil desires.

Various kinds of diversions have definitely been around for a long time, including during the Prophet's era, as mentioned in the surah Al-Jumu'ah verse 11: 'And when they see (some) commercial dealing or some diversion, they break away to it, and they leave you (standing) upright. Say, "What is in the Providence of Allah is more charitable (i.e., sealed) than diversion and commerce; and Allah is The Most Charitable of providers"'[4]. The verse implies that Allah *subhanahu wa ta`ala* is All-Knowing of the past, present and future, and commerce and diversion

are Shaitan's devices to deceive humans and make them heedless of Allah's command. Humans prefer commerce and diversion as if they would be indeed in loss if they gave them up. They do not listen to what Allah *subhanahu wa ta`ala* says in the surah Az-Zumar verse 15: 'So worship whatever you decide on, apart from Him. Say, "Surely the losers are they who lose their (own) selves and their own families on the Day of the Resurrection." Verily that is the evident, all-deserved loss'[4].

The verse clearly asserts that somebody who has been addicted to something is likened to having traded half of his soul to the thing. Online game addicts frequently prefer playing games to performing as-salat, for example, so they stray from the path of Allah. Allah *subhanahu wa ta`ala* states in the Qur'an that what is with Allah is better than diversion; online game addicts have lost their (own) selves because the true life is in the Hereafter, as explained in the surah Al-'Ankabut verse 64: 'The life of this world is merely an amusement and a diversion; the true life is in the Hereafter, if only they knew' [4].

The Hereafter—the Akhirat—is the eternal life that will never end nor diminish. Online game addicts see the virtual world as the real one that they can explore anytime. They see this worldly life solely from its materialistic side, something that they perceive to be fascinating, admirable, and able to exalt them. As the surah Ar-Rum verse 7 puts it, 'They 'only' know the worldly affairs of this life, but are 'totally' oblivious to the Hereafter' [4].

According to the Qur'an, negligence in following Allah's command will make humans only recognize the materialistic affairs of this worldly life, heedless of the true life of the Hereafter. In the surah Al-A'raf verse 179, Allah *subhanahu wa ta`ala* says:'Indeed, We have destined many jinn and humans for Hell. They have hearts they do not understand with, eyes they do not see with, and ears they do not hear with. They are like cattle. In fact, they are even less guided! Such 'people' are 'entirely' heedless'[4].Negligence and heedlessness are present due to inability to restrain one's self from evil desires. Similarly, online game addicts can hardly prevent themselves from playing games excessively and seeking acclaim from others. Allah *subhanahu wa ta`ala* has warned us in the surah Al-Kahf verse 28: '… do not yield to those whose hearts We have made heedless of our Qur'an, those who follow their own low desires, those whose ways are unbridled' [4].

The Qur'an has always reminded us of Allah's greatness and warned us not to plunge into depravity, as referred to in the surah Fatir verse 5:'O humanity! Indeed, Allah's promise is true. So do not let the life of this world deceive you, nor let the Chief Deceiver deceive you about Allah'[4].

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the above discussion, it can be concluded that online game addiction is a type of internet addiction disorder. Online game addiction behavior in adolescents in an Islamic perspective is influenced by excessive pleasure, negligence, and following lust. The factors that influence online game addiction are lack of attention from the people closest to you, stress and depression, lack of control, lack of activity and parenting. From the results of this study, it is hoped that guidance and counselling teachers can make special programs by providing services to students about online game addiction in adolescents.

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