Islamic Counseling for The Prevention of Game Addiction: Case Study in Elementary School

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\textbf{ABSTRACT}

Game addiction is a problem that gets much attention and is often discussed by the public. Currently, much research focuses more on prevention efforts for gaming addiction. The rapid development of technology will undoubtedly have negative impacts, including the development of technology, leading to elementary school children being vulnerable to games. This article examines various alternatives to prevent game addiction, especially for elementary school children easily influenced by fun things like games. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research location, namely Majlis Darul Ishlah, North Pekalongan, with research subjects being children aged 10-12 years. Conducting interviews, observation, and documentation uses a case study approach. The research that has been carried out has shown that Islamic counseling can significantly reduce gaming addiction in elementary school children, with a good increase in academic achievement and increased social interaction.

\textbf{Keyword:} Counseling; games; handling; elementary school children

\textbf{ABSTRAK}

Kecanduan game merupakan masalah yang banyak mendapat perhatian dan sering dibicarakan oleh masyarakat. Saat ini, banyak penelitian yang lebih fokus terhadap upaya pencegahan untuk kecanduan game. Pesatnya perkembangan teknologi tentunya akan menimbulkan dampak negatif, diantaranya perkembangan teknologi yang mengarah pada anak sekolah dasar yang rentan terhadap game. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji berbagai alternatif pencegahan kecanduan game, khususnya bagi anak sekolah dasar yang mudah terpengaruh oleh hal-hal menyenangkan seperti game. Metode yang digunakan pada penelitian ini adalah kualitatif deskriptif lokasi penelitian yaitu di Majlis Darul Ishlah Pekalongan Utara dengan subjek penelitian anak usia 10-12 tahun. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus dengan melakukan dengan cara wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Dari penelitian yang sudah dilakukan menghasilkan menunjukkan bahwa konseling islam dapat secara signifikan mengurangi kecanduan game pada anak
INTRODUCTION

In primary school, children develop fundamental motor skills for balancing, running, jumping, and throwing. Metacognitive development encourages children to learn about their cognitive abilities to identify the right ways to learn and solve problems. The primary role of parents and teachers in educating elementary school students is to provide good examples and attitudes. The World Health Organization defines game addiction in elementary school children as a mental disorder included in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) (Kemenkes, 2018). It is characterized by unlimited game control, prioritizing the game display over other activities. This behavior persists despite its negative impact on elementary school children. Excessive game time can disrupt daily life, significantly altering students' priorities and reducing interest in subjects unrelated to games (King et al., 2018).

At this stage, elementary school children undergo various changes in themselves, both physically and psychologically, individually or in their social roles in the family, school, and the surrounding community. In today's millennium, elementary school-age children are exposed to advanced technology that facilitates access to the information they need (Novrialdy et al., 2019).

Technological progress is advancing rapidly, and lifestyle changes are easily facilitated, providing significant benefits to progress in all educational fields. Games are one of the impacts of technological development, and information is the game. Piaget's cognitive theory indicates that elementary school children are generally in the concrete operational stage. Erikson's psychosocial theory divides elementary school children into the industry and inferiority stages. Piaget's moral development theory explains that elementary school children aged 7 to 10 generally transition from heteronomous to autonomous morality. Physical development in elementary school children can be observed in the overall picture of increased height and weight ratios and other direct physical characteristics (Khiyarusoleh, 2016).

In the modern era, elementary school children spend more time with games (Novitasari & Khotimah, 2016). Children who are interested in a subject increase their
learning outcomes and enthusiasm (Novika et al., 2021). Game addiction makes children reluctant to study, prioritizing games over school grades. Lack of good social interaction with peers can lead children to choose playing games at home as a fun alternative, triggering game addiction (Masya & Candra, 2016).

With the development of modern technology, various factors contribute to game addiction, and the types of games have evolved. Games once played outdoors with available resources and children's creativity have transformed into solitary screen time with powerful imaginations. Moving images on the screen can be seen and controlled by the phone screen, and children become immersed in their finger movements on the screen, supported by sophisticated and high-speed technology (Sha & Seo, 2018). This causes children to become self-absorbed and sometimes withdraw from natural social environments, earning them the label of game addicts (Hadisaputra et al., 2022). Game addiction, as an often unnoticed psychological disorder, affects the user's abilities, causing problems in relationships and society, leading children to lose valuable time in their lives for communication and interaction with their environment, spending less time with family, and slowly withdrawing from their usual routines.

Children in elementary school are generally more focused on playing and trying new things. They rarely play and satisfy their curiosity through games because they are considered challenging and exciting (Gentile et al., 2017). Games are applications provided by game developers in the form of mobile applications. Children who are already comfortable playing games may become antisocial, preferring to interact with their gadgets rather than play with friends. Excessive game use can make students less sociable in their environment. Children are more interested in spending time playing games.

Children who always play games tend to be individualistic and indifferent to their social environment during elementary school, prioritizing playing games over increasing their enthusiasm for learning. However, parents sometimes overlook the impact of game addiction on elementary school children, which significantly affects their enthusiasm for learning. Rarely implemented solutions include involving and guiding children to engage in positive activities such as cooking, cycling, sports, and recitation at home, repeatedly emphasizing the importance of a learning spirit for the future and the consequences of frequent gaming, and advising children not to make a habit of playing games and the impact it will have in the future (Cyranoski, 2020).
The general objective of the research is to determine the handling of game addiction in elementary school-age children that impacts their enthusiasm for learning. Specific objectives include identifying ways to prevent game addiction in elementary school children, identifying game addiction in elementary school children, and analyzing the enthusiasm for learning in children addicted to games.

METHODS

The approach used in this research is a descriptive qualitative approach. The research design is a case study conducted through interviews, observations, and documentation. This research provides a detailed and in-depth portrayal of a specific phenomenon related to manipulating games in elementary school children (Semiawan, 2010). Elementary school children aged 7 to 12 are highly susceptible to influence and quickly seek things they enjoy. Data collection in this study involves structured interview techniques. This research method involves direct communication or interaction between the researcher and the informant to gather information through question-and-answer sessions (Sugiyono, 2017). Based on the characteristics of the informants, questions asked are then clarified for similarities and differences in answers among informants. The following are interviews with 12 elementary school respondents.

According to Heppner et al. (2008), a case study approach can provide some information, but most need more experimental control and yield tentative conclusions. Case studies can offer valuable insights for research when researchers have limited constraints on an event related to the real-life experiences of individuals, groups, communities, or organizations.

Elementary school-age children have unique characteristics as they are still in the developmental stage and have high emotional sensitivity. Children tend to become easily angered and hold grudges if their curiosity about something new is not satisfied or fulfilled. This curiosity is often directed towards games.

There are several reasons for the researcher to use this approach. Firstly, this research aims to gain an overview of game addiction behavior in elementary school children, which significantly impacts their enthusiasm for learning. Secondly, the aim is to identify factors influencing the behavior of elementary school students with game addiction.
The research process begins with a comprehensive search followed by data collection and analysis techniques. The focus of this research is to examine the symptoms and impacts of game addiction on elementary school-age children.

The research focuses on describing the behavior of elementary school students addicted to games and the factors influencing their behavior. To avoid differences in understanding the research subject, a description of the research focus or operational definition is provided: 1) Elementary school students are individuals in their golden age who still enjoy playing with their friends, and the most memorable episodes involve characters who like to try new games. The transition towards maturity requires serious attention from educators and necessitates a psychological, pedagogical, and sociological approach to the child's development to obtain objective information about arising issues; 2) Playing is an activity that can drain emotions and consume time. To spend more time on their phones, individuals addicted to games refuse to sleep, eat, exercise, engage in other activities, and socialize (Lindaningsih, 2009; Syahran, 2015). 3) Games for elementary school children are enjoyable, engaging activities that provide satisfaction and help avoid school tasks, claiming independence as a reason (Zaini, 2015); and 4) School guidance and counseling play a strategic role in developing and guiding student behavior to align with the developmental environment's demands and avoid potential future harm. As a data collection tool, the researcher is directly involved in the research location, gathering information during the research process with the help of observation and interview guidelines summarized in field notes. Information obtained through observation and interviews describes the types of game addiction, factors influencing game addiction in elementary school children, and the impact of game addiction on academic achievement and relationships with peers, friends, acquaintances, and the parents of students, as well as teachers visiting students' homes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research reveal that Islamic counseling methods have a positive impact on preventing gambling addiction in elementary school children. Counseling efforts for game addiction in elementary school children, through in-depth case studies, indicate that an approach based on Islamic values, the formation of healthy habits, and intelligent time planning can play a significant role. Islamic counseling encourages students to
understand moral values, ethics, and responsibilities, helping them develop self-awareness. In the context of preventing game addiction, counselors provide a strong understanding of the negative impacts of excessive internet gaming and offer more favorable opportunities to fill leisure time.

The research also emphasizes the crucial involvement of parents and teachers in counseling. Close collaboration between schools, families, and communities forms a practical foundation for creating an environment supporting gambling addiction prevention. Therefore, Islamic counseling is not just an individual solution but integrates various stakeholders. The study underscores the importance of balancing modern technology and traditional values. Islamic counseling teaches students not only to avoid gambling addiction but also to appreciate daily life, engage in social interactions, and holistically develop their potential. Thus, the Islamic counseling approach proves effective in preventing gambling addiction in elementary school children and provides a strong foundation for balanced and meaningful life development.

The World Health Organization defines game addiction as a mental disorder in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) (Kemenkes, 2018). It is characterized by losing control over gaming and prioritizing games over other activities, even to the child's detriment. Research indicates that game addiction is more prevalent in elementary school children who are highly susceptible to the changing times (AlMarshedi et al., 2017).

The research adopts a qualitative approach, specifically a case study, providing detailed insights into a specific phenomenon, namely the manipulation of elementary school children's gaming behavior. According to Heppner et al. (2008), case studies can offer valuable information, although they often lack experimental control.

The counseling theory used in this research for preventing game addiction in children is the behavioral approach, grounded in experimental findings investigating human behavioral principles. The action-oriented method helps take clear steps in changing behavior. Behavioral counseling assumes that every behavior can be learned, old behaviors can be replaced with new ones, and individuals have the potential to behave well or poorly. Moreover, humans are viewed as capable of reflecting on their behavior, regulating and controlling it, learning new behaviors, or influencing others' behavior (Dubois & Walker, 1988).
Game addiction can affect anyone, especially elementary school children, adolescents, and adults. While gaming can be a fun way to cope with stress, continuous gaming habits can negatively impact a child's life (Baggio et al., 2016). When playing games becomes an addiction, it needs to be prevented to avoid detrimental consequences.

Game addiction is defined as a mental disorder accompanied by an irresistible urge to play games for hours, neglecting other activities like studying and school assignments (Griffiths, 2018; Kiniret & Susilowati, 2021). This type of addiction can lead to various psychological issues, such as anxiety disorders, to achieve satisfaction from gaming. Observations and interviews revealed several symptoms of game addiction, including a strong desire to play at all times, anger and emotional distress when not playing, needing more time to enhance gaming satisfaction, neglecting essential activities, experiencing problems at school and home due to gaming habits, and even lying to parents or others about gaming.

In addition to psychological symptoms, children addicted to games may experience physical symptoms, such as fatigue, headaches, eye strain, and overall body fatigue. In severe cases, game addicts can develop nerve disorders in their hands due to prolonged gaming.

Game addiction in elementary school children can have negative impacts on health, psychological well-being, academic performance, and social aspects (Novrialdy, 2019). The health aspect includes weakened immune systems due to lack of physical activity, insufficient sleep, and irregular eating habits. Psychologically, exposure to in-game actions, such as fights and destruction, can affect a child's subconscious, leading to emotional issues and outbursts. Academically, gaming can distract children from their studies, reducing concentration and academic performance. Socially, game-addicted children may struggle to interact in the real world, exhibiting antisocial behavior and a lack of interest in connecting with family and friends.

Prevention refers to various interventions to stop and avoid conditions that pose risks to an individual's well-being (Tolan et al., 2013). It includes efforts to halt problematic behavior before it occurs, prevent the emergence of problematic behavior, reduce the impact of rising problematic behavior, strengthen knowledge and attitudes, and instill positive behaviors in individuals already addicted to games. Raising awareness about the impacts of game addiction is essential for improving children's mental health (Akbar, 2020).
Several prevention efforts for game addiction include attention switching, dissuasion, education, parental monitoring, and resource restriction (Kusumaningrum, 2021). Attention switching involves diverting a player's focus from excessive game engagement. Extracurricular activities, such as sports, can reduce gaming focus and addiction. Significant others around elementary school children must understand potential interests and find effective ways to divert attention from excessive gaming.

Dissuasion prevents gaming by providing advice, arguments, persuasion, and exploration, even through coercion. Persuasion is used by external forces (parents, teachers, and friends) to prevent undesirable behavior. Education focuses on knowledge and educational efforts targeting a child's cognition. It aims to build a solid cognitive foundation that can be self-managed.

This implies that individuals must actively avoid game addiction by reading newspaper articles or watching the news. The encouragement of social circles is also needed for these efforts to be practical. As educational institutions, schools can contribute to prevention by promoting positive behavior. Elementary school children can gain knowledge and understanding, helping prevent addictive behaviors. Schools play an essential role in preventing game addiction, as many children may lack sufficient understanding of the dangers of game addiction.

Parental monitoring involves parents paying attention to their children. Parents play a crucial role in preventing problematic behaviors, especially game addiction. Effective communication between parents and children is vital, as studies show that parental communication about phone usage prevents game addiction. This highlights the importance of good communication between parents and children. Parents influence their children's activities both outside and inside the home. Lack of parental supervision correlates with risky behavior and antisocial behavior in children. Monitoring children's game activities effectively prevents excessive and inappropriate game usage.

Resource restriction involves limiting various resources for playing games. Game addiction can be caused by various factors, including easy access to games in the current era (King & Delfabbro, 2018). Individuals with easy access tend to play more often and for longer durations. Restricting access to game-related resources, such as money and gaming equipment, can limit children's exposure to excessive gaming at home.
CONCLUSIONS

Islamic counseling is worth considering as a practical approach to preventing game addiction in elementary school children. Children can develop a healthy balance between video games and other activities by understanding Islamic values and appropriate family support.

The development of Islamic counseling methods to prevent game addiction in elementary school students is the focus of this research. The aim is to present conceptual strategies counselors and parents can use to address this issue. Through relevant literature reviews and empirical research, this article provides recent research findings, including identifying risk factors and the necessity of incorporating Islamic values into the counseling process.

This research lays the groundwork for developing effective counseling methods to prevent excessive gaming in elementary school children. The study discusses applying Islamic counseling principles in introducing moral and spiritual values to help children develop a healthy attitude towards game usage. Additionally, it explores the roles of parents and counselors in supporting children's emotional and mental development balance. The research aims to provide broader insights and understanding of various aspects of developing practical Islamic counseling approaches to prevent game usage in elementary school children. The contribution of this research is expected to serve as a foundation for developing more effective strategies and interventions to help children overcome fundamental challenges in the current digital era.

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