






## The correlation between parents interaction conflict with online game addiction in adolescents

Iqlima Dwi Kurnia<sup>1</sup> \* , Bangun Mukti Ardi<sup>1</sup>, Ilya Krisnana<sup>1</sup> , Aria Aulia Nastiti<sup>1</sup> ,  
 Pratuma Rithpho<sup>2</sup> , and Yuni Sufyanti Arief<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Nursing, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Nursing, Naresuan University, Phitsanulok, Thailand

\*Correspondence: Iqlima Dwi Kurnia. Address: Faculty of Nursing, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia. Email: [Iqlima.dwi.k@fkn.unair.ac.id](mailto:Iqlima.dwi.k@fkn.unair.ac.id)

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The prevalence of online game addiction has increased among adolescents in Indonesia. This study aimed to analyze the correlation between parent conflict and online game addiction among adolescents.

**Methods:** This study used a cross-sectional, correlational design. The inclusion criteria in this study were as follows: (1) adolescents between the ages of 13-19 and who were male, and (2) adolescents who were willing to become respondents. Eighty adolescents were approached according to the inclusion criteria, and 73 respondents were eligible for this study. The data collection method used was a questionnaire filled out by adolescents. The questionnaire was adapted to adolescents and to determine adolescents' perceptions of interaction conflict. Statistical analysis was performed using Spearman's rank test with  $\alpha=0.05$ .

**Results:** Parental interaction conflict was positively related to online game addiction among adolescents ( $p = 0.004$ ). The majority of respondents who experienced online game addiction in the fair category had low interaction conflicts with their parents.

**Conclusions:** Conflict of interaction with parents can cause adolescents to become addicted to online games. Parents are expected to engage in good interactions in accordance with the stages of adolescent development. Parents should be able to complete their problem interactions well.

**Keywords:** conflict interaction, mental health, addiction, game online, adolescent

### Introduction

The rapid development of technology, such as information, communication, and entertainment, is currently being used by teenagers. One of its uses is to play online games (Karaca *et al.*, 2020). Online game addiction is a compulsive psychological state, or uncontrollable dependence on online games played over computer networks, usually via the Internet, that occurs among adolescents (Lee and Kim, 2017), and causes serious problems. For example, addiction to online games has a wide range of negative effects on daily life and can interfere with psychological balance,

sleep quality, and academic achievement (Montag, Schivinski, and Pontes, 2021). Online game addiction can be seen from the use of time for (on average) 20-25 hours a week, and the average time spent playing online games is more than four hours per day (Fitri, Emria, and Lira Erwinda, 2018).

Previous research shows that online game addiction has a negative impact on the psychological state of compulsive or uncontrollable dependence (Mun and Lee 2022; Rosendo-Rios, Trott, and Shukla, 2022). Gaming is just another recreational activity, but it can be a problem when people lose control of it (Young, 2016)



and it becomes a mental disorder (Brink, [2017](#)). In previous studies, attention deficit, depression, low self-esteem, and negative interpersonal relationships have been found to be predictors of addictive and problematic online game use in children and adolescents (Mun and Lee [2022](#)). In addition, parental factors, including parent-child relationships and parental attachment, are also significantly associated with online game addiction in adolescents (Kim, K., and Kim, [2015](#)). However, research that further discusses the conflict between parent and child interaction and online game addiction is still lacking.

The results of previous studies in China mentioned that parental factors, including parent-child relationship and parental attachment, are also significantly associated with adolescent online game addiction, and that parental psychological problems are critical risk factors for the development of internalizing and externalizing problems in children and adolescents (Xu, Cui, and Lawrence, [2020](#)). Based on the results of a study conducted in Tangerang, it was shown that a lack of interaction in the family can cause online games in adolescents to become a daily necessity (Yudha, [2015](#)). Shearman and Dumlao in Japan show that the relationship between family communication and adolescents deteriorates (Ozmete and Bayoglu, [2009](#)). Conflict between parents and adolescents can have a negative impact on adolescent behavior (Doorn *et al.*, [2008](#)). Previous research has shown that depression and low family monitoring are discriminative factors for Internet addiction (Zhang *et al.*, [2022a](#))

The global population of internet users has increased (Qiu *et al.*, [2022](#)). Collaborative research between the Association of Internet Services Indonesia (APJII, [2014](#)) shows Indonesia ranks fourth after China, India, and Japan in terms of the number of Internet users, with 88 million Internet users per day, which is 34.1% of the total population in Indonesia. This represents a 4,300% growth over the last 16 years. Looking at children between the ages of 8 and 18, it was found that 88% played games electronically and 68% indicated that they played at least weekly, and 23 % daily (Zhang *et al.*, [2022a](#)). Previous research concluded that adolescents who have negative parent-child relationships and conflict interactions tend to divert their attention to online games to obtain emotional needs that cannot be obtained from the family (Qiu *et al.*, [2022](#)).

Research by Fuadi (2016) in Surabaya, showed there to be three 3 levels of addiction: 41.7% for medium addiction, 25% for low addiction, and 25% for high addiction. Assistance and the application of parenting efforts influence the level of problems that arise from

online gaming addiction (Joung, [2014](#)). Online gaming is a psychosocial problem commonly found in children and adolescents (Rahmawati, Bahar, B, and Salam, [2013](#)) and players will play continuously (addiction) regardless of how long they spend (Choi *et al.*, [2018](#)). Internet addiction is a common disorder (Ahmed *et al.*, [2022](#)), and consists of at least three subtypes: excessive gaming, sexual preoccupation, and e-mail/text messaging (Block, [2008](#)).

Previous research shows that the impact of online game addiction includes a loss of interpersonal relationships, failure to cope with responsibilities, impaired aspects of life, and poor health (Lin, [2015](#)). The attitude of parents toward their child, closeness of the family, and their exposure to domestic violence will cause online game addiction (Wu *et al.*, [2022](#)). The behavior that appears due to the game's excessive online nature needs the interventions of the family to prevent online game addiction, and for parents to intensively communicate with their children (Kim *et al.*, [2003](#); Piotrowski *et al.*, [2015](#)). However, studies that explain the relationship between parent-interaction conflict and online gaming among adolescents have not yet been conducted. The purpose of this study was to explain the relationship between parent-conflict interactions with online game addiction in adolescents. The results of this study will provide a better perspective on the concept of interaction between parents and children, and will increase perspectives to minimize conflict interactions that occur between children and parents, as well as serve educators who mediate between parents and children in solving problems related to interaction conflict.

## Materials and Methods

The design of this study was correlational, using a cross-sectional approach intended to determine the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable. The sampling method used was purposive. The independent variable in this study was parent-conflict interaction. The questions in the questionnaire were adjusted to be completed by the adolescents to examine adolescents' perceptions of perceived interaction conflict. The dependent variable in this study was online game addiction.

The study population consisted of adolescents who were online game users at GamerCamp (GC) in Surabaya. The sample size of this study was 62 adolescents in Surabaya. The reason we use the GamerCamp site is because, based on the results of a preliminary study in several GamerCamps, the site in

Klampus is the most visited by adolescents and is the largest in Surabaya with strategic internet café location supported by cheap rates of Rp. 4,000.00 per hour. This is also due to the large number of PCs, reaching 64 PCs with an average connection speed of 65.00 Mbps.

The inclusion criteria in this study were as follows: (1) adolescents between the ages of 13 – 19 and who were male, and (2) adolescents who were willing to become respondents. The exclusion criterion was adolescents who played online games for the first time. The subject recruitment process in the GC Klampus Surabaya was conducted from 10:00 am to 9 pm within 1 month, according to the inclusion criteria. Researchers assume that gamers who have visited for the second time have an interest and desire to continue playing online games, which in turn can lead to addiction because the reference source that researchers use is said to be addicted to online games as seen from the use of time (on average) between 20-25 hours a week. Eighty adolescents were approached according to the inclusion criteria and there were 73 respondents included. After receiving an explanation of the study, parents who agreed to their children as research respondents and adolescents who were willing resulted to 62 respondents. The researcher gave an explanation to the adolescents about the goals, benefits and risks, the principles of confidentiality, the fact that it was voluntary, compensation and the involvement of the adolescents in the study itself. After that, the researchers distributed approval sheets to the adolescents for them to give to their parents. An explanation of the study was also given to their parents along with the informed consent sheet, and informed consent was signed by the parents.

The independent variable in this study was the conflict of parents' interactions, while the dependent variable in this study was online game addiction. The Internet addiction test (IAT) was used to assess online game addiction. The questionnaire was translated into Indonesian and tested for its validity and reliability. All items of the questionnaire had good validity scores, and the reliability test had a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  score of 0.756. The questionnaire detail had six parameters: Saliency, excessive use, neglect work, anticipation, lack of control and neglect social life. The questionnaire consisted of 20 statements with the following interpretation of the scores: 0-30 = Not addicted; 31-49 = Mild addiction; 50-79 = Moderate addiction; 80-100 = Severe addiction.

The instrument used to assess conflict interactions between parents and adolescents is the Parents Conflict Interaction & Adolescent Questionnaire, which is filled

by adolescents to see adolescents' perceptions of perceived interaction conflict. Adolescents who are able to feel the interaction conflict that occurs are not seen from the perspective of parents because of their higher level of subjectivity. The questionnaire was completed independently by the adolescents. Adolescent answers are feelings experienced in relation to the conflict interaction that has been applied by parents. Parent conflict interaction was measured using the Parents Conflict Interaction and Adolescents Questionnaire developed by Lestari (2009). The questionnaire has three main indicators: habits and social life, which also include relationships with family and social conventions. The second indicator is responsibility and the last is the achievement of the school. The Parents Conflict Interaction and Adolescent Questionnaire was tested for its validity and reliability. All questionnaire items had good validity scores, and reliability testing showed a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of 0.450. The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions based on three parameters: Social Habits and Life, Responsibilities and School Achievements. The interpretation of scores is high interaction conflict = average mark value and low interaction conflict = average mark value.

Before carrying out the data research, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, benefits, confidentiality of data, compensation, and voluntary elements for adolescents to accept or refuse to become respondents. Adolescents were of an age where they already have the cognitive ability to understand the explanation and so can give an informed consent. The researcher asked for permission from the GamerCamp site owner to carry out the research and went to the GamerCamp every day from 10 am to 9 pm after obtaining approval from internet cafe owners. The researcher gave an explanation to the adolescents about the goals, the benefits and risks, the principles of confidentiality, the fact that it was voluntary, compensation and the involvement of the adolescents in the study itself. Subsequently, the researchers distributed approval sheets to the adolescents to give them to their parents. On the parental consent sheet, the researcher asked for the parents' telephone numbers to crosscheck and ensure that the parents had agreed to their child as a research respondent. An explanation of the study was also given to their parents along with an informed consent sheet which they. The next step was to distribute the questionnaires to the adolescents, and both the parent-adolescent interaction conflict questionnaire and IAT were carried out for 30 minutes. After the respondent completed the

questionnaire, it was returned to the researcher and the completeness of the answers was checked. In this way, if there were incomplete data (demographic data), it could be resolved immediately. After all respondents filled out the questionnaire, the researchers gave them souvenirs in the form of stationery and education about the wider use of online games.

The results of the data obtained were then used to conduct descriptive and inferential analyses. The descriptive data analysis was about the percentage or frequency distribution, mean, and standard deviation, and the inferential analysis used Spearman's Rho Test correlation with  $\alpha=0.05$ .

This research was assessed using ethical standards and it was certified with Ethical Approval No. 294 - KEPK on January 12, 2017, issued by the Faculty of Nursing of Universitas Airlangga.

## Results

Table 1 shows that most respondents were adolescents aged 17 - 19 years old (53 people; 85.5%).

Table 1 Demographic characteristic

Characteristic	N	%
<b>Age of Respondents</b>		
13 - 16 years	9	14.5
17 - 19 years	53	85.5
Total	62	100
<b>Education</b>		
Junior High School	17	27.4
Senior High School	40	64.5
No school (Never gone to school)	5	8.1
Total	62	100
<b>Number of Siblings</b>		
Do not have	10	16.1
1	27	43.5
2	17	27.4
More than 2	8	12.9
Total	62	100
<b>Child Order:</b>		
1	27	43.5
2	22	35.5
More than 2	13	21
Total	62	100
<b>Nearest Person with Respondents</b>		
Friends, both at home and at school	12	19.4
Brother and /or sister	24	38.7
Parents		
Total	62	100
<b>Frequent Type Of Online Game Played</b>		
War game	46	74.2
Game strategy	16	22.6
Game on social media	2	3.2
Total	62	100
<b>Duration of Playing Online game</b>		
Less than 3 hours	29	46.8
2- 6 hours	30	48.4
6 - 12 hours	3	4.8
Total	62	100

Table 2 Cross-tabulation of parents

Parents' Interaction Conflict	Addiction to Online Game Total									
	High		Moderate		Fair		No Addiction			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
High	0	0	13	21	13	21	3	4.8	29	46.8
Low	0	0	7	11.3	18	29	8	12.9	33	53.2
Total	0	0	20	32.3	31	50	11	17.7	62	100

Significance (p): 0,004

Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient (r): 0.360

The majority consisted of senior high school students (40 people, 64.5%). The adolescents playing at GC Internet Corner had one sibling (27 people; 43.5%). Most of the respondents were the first children (27 people; 43.5%). The respondents were closer to their friends, both at home and at school (26 people; 41.9%), and most of the respondents who played online games did so for 3 - 6 hours per day (30 people; 48.4%).

Table 2 illustrates that most respondents had a conflict with their parents in the low category (33 people; 53.2%). Table 2 shows that most respondents were in the categories of low addiction (31 people; 50%) and medium addiction (20 people; 32.3%).

Table 2 shows that most respondents who experienced online game addiction had a level of conflict interaction with their parents that was in the high category (13 people; 21%). The cross-tabulation data also show that there were three people (4.8%) who did not experience online game addiction who had a high level of interaction conflict with their parents.

The relationship between the parents' interaction conflict and online game addiction in adolescents, based on the non-parametric Spearman rho test, had a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ . The analysis showed a p value of 0.004. This means that there is a relationship between parents' interaction conflict and online game addiction in adolescents at the GC Internet Corner in Klampis, Surabaya. In addition, the alternative hypothesis shows that there is a relationship based on a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.360. This means that there is a weak and positive correlation coefficient, indicating that the relationship between the two variables is in the same direction, with the same high value.

The findings from this study found that respondents who had high interaction conflicts with their parents had addiction to online games with high categories. Conflicts occur due to demands from parents who want their children to be better. The respondent's parents will be angry and punished if the respondent is caught skipping school and gets bad grades in school. In addition, the parents of the respondents always demanded that their children study. A small percentage of the respondents thought that their parents were old-fashioned. This is because their parents still apply the education system

from their days, as well as respondents think that their parents in educating them do not follow the developments of the times. Respondents said that their parents always regulated their personality without giving them the opportunity to develop it. With this finding, it is hoped that parents can better understand the characteristics of their children according to their growth and development age, so that a harmonious relationship can be established.

## Discussions

In this study, it was hypothesized that high levels of parental interaction conflict can cause adolescents to become addicted to online games at high levels. The findings of this study revealed that most respondents who experienced a fair category of online game addiction had low interaction conflicts with their parents. The results of this study are in accordance with several previous research results that the parents' interaction conflict is the reinforcing factor that influences and shapes the behavior of adolescents when playing online games, leading to addiction. The higher the stress level and the less support from the family, the greater the risk of depression in adolescents will be increased (Nursalam, 2009). Early adolescence is a time when conflict between adolescents and parents increases. This increase can occur because of several factors that have been discussed, which involve adolescent maturation and maturation of parents (Wu *et al.*, 2022). The results of this study show that there is a relationship between parental interaction with online game addiction in adolescents (Zhang *et al.*, 2022b). This is consistent with previous research showing that negative parent-child relationships will lead to reduced communication between parents and children, resulting in alienation, interaction conflict, and compensation behavior of adolescents seeking emotional warmth and support through online games (Qiu *et al.*, 2022).

The results showed that almost half of the respondents experienced high interaction conflict with their parents. Conflict with their parents increases in early adolescence and involves daily activities such as tidying the bedroom, dressing neatly, going home before a certain hour, not talking too long on the phone and so on (Liu *et al.*, 2020). Adolescents experience social transition changes in their individual relationships with others, especially in terms of their emotions, personality, and social role context in development (Qiu *et al.*, 2022). During this period of change and transition, adolescents face new conditions and are under social pressure, whereas during childhood they are less

prepared (Griffiths, 2022). Good family interactions can reduce conflicts that may occur between children and their parents (Nursalam, Alit and Fauziningtyas, 2009). Parent-child conflict interaction is one of the predictors of game online addiction, improving parent-child interaction can contribute to weaken online game addiction (Gonzalez-Buesoet *et al.*, 2018)

Another factor that also affects parental interaction conflict is the age of the respondents, who in this study were mostly aged 17–19 years (late teenagers). Stanley Hall cited in Santrock (2003), states that being a teenager is a time when storms and stress come out; it is a time of problem. Adolescents experience a period of identity crisis that includes identity diffusion/confusion, moratorium, foreclosure, and identity achievement (Griffiths, 2022). Self-actualization is achieved when players are able to achieve the highest level of the game. In fact, in the process of achieving this, teenagers can put aside their daily activities, as well as their patterns of interaction with their parents (Santrock, 2003). The characteristics of young people who experience problems are adolescents who experience resistance and challenge with their parents, as well as conflicts within themselves, which are often the root cause of contradictions and interaction conflicts with their parents (Yilmaz *et al.*, 2023).

Most respondents were close to their friends, both at home and at school. This can cause conflicts when respondents interact with their parents. They like gathering or playing online games with friends (Durak *et al.*, 2022). They also revealed that the person nearest to the respondent was their friend, both at home and at school. According to previous research, adolescents will be closer to their friends during this developmental period (Wang *et al.*, 2022). Adolescents prefer to hang out with their friends, and when they experience interaction conflict with their parents, they prefer to get together with their friends (Wang *et al.*, 2021).

The tabulation data showed that a major cause of conflict was the demands of parents who wanted their children to be better. The parents would be angry and punish their child if the respondent was caught skipping class or if they were getting bad grades in school. In addition, parents demanded that their children study at any time. A small percentage of the respondents thought that their parents were old-fashioned because they were still applying the system of education that was used in their own era. The respondents mentioned that their parents always regulated their personality without giving them the opportunity to develop it. Previous research has shown that children grow and thrive in



beneficial environments with supportive relationships. A good relationship will positively affect their development, including adjustment, prosperity, prosocial behavior, and value transmission. Fostering interaction with the child's parent requires good communication to be in place (Bittman, Rutherford, and Brown, 2015).

According to Imanuel (2009), gender is one of the factors that can influence online game addiction. Gender significantly influences the personal factors involved in playing online games. Several studies have shown that men play games more than women do because men are more inclined to fantasize and want to feel the adrenaline rush. Adolescents, have the greatest influence in terms of online game addiction, because youth is a stage where they are between the phases of childhood and adulthood through physical and psychological changes. As a result, when adolescents experience various conflicts related to themselves, they begin to question their self-concept, think about their ideal characteristics, and compare themselves with others' ideal standards (Efendi, 2009). The data obtained by the researchers at Surabaya consisted of a sample of all males.

The respondents also believed that online gaming was fun during the conflict. Furthermore, it relates to another indicator (Young, 2011), namely, mood modification. Mood modification refers to the happiness and peacefulness experienced when addictive behaviors arise. The game was used to cope with or escape from problems. A small proportion of the respondents said that their friends complained when they played online games. However, the respondents who were depressed or anxious offline did not feel so after returning to playing online games.

The results indicate that there is a relationship between parenting and addiction to online gaming. Protective parents can cause adolescents to seek refuge while playing online games. In addition, research conducted by (Nursalam, Armini and Fauziningtyas, 2009) mentioned that the pattern of bad interactions between parents and their children can lead to delinquency in adolescents.

## Conclusions

Parental interaction conflict is related with online game addiction. Parental interaction conflicts can influence and shape respondents' behavior in playing online games as an escape mechanism for dealing with conflicts with parents, which, if not controlled, can lead to addiction. Parents are expected to engage in good

interactions in accordance with the stages of adolescent development. Parents should be able to complete their problem interactions well. Nurses can provide training and counseling to parents to improve communication, interaction, and relationships with children to increase the fulfillment of children's emotional needs, so that the use of online games can be reduced.

## Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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