

The Herd Mentality of Adolescents as Shown in Their Participation in Online Gaming

Yuhao Li*

Department of University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK

*Corresponding author: 2612804@student.gla.ac.uk

Abstract. At an alarming pace, internet gaming has become more popular among teens worldwide. This has been spurred by technical improvements that have resulted in the production of high-graphic films and characters in gaming that are very appealing due to their lifelike characteristics and realistic, complex game systems. These characteristics attract a large number of teenagers, the majority of whom experience no negative consequences. Nevertheless, some of the most avid adolescent gamers are unable to maintain a healthy balance between gaming, schoolwork, social obligations, and other obligations. Consequently, the majority of teenagers have almost the same mindset as described in this research. The evidence for the claim is shown by analysis of teenage behaviors involved in gaming through the use of literature reviews and available data from relevant databases in order to demonstrate how they perceive the concept of participation in online gaming and connect them with real-life experiences. This paper will show how gaming has impacted on personal and social lives of most adolescents by addressing the psychological and mental issues that they have to encounter during this period of development and growth to become decent adults.

Keywords: Herd Mentality; Online Gaming; Adolescents.

1. Introduction

Appropriate internet gaming may have a favorable effect on adolescents' leisure time management, problem-solving skills, social skills, and short-term memory. The group of adolescent gamers tend to have a common mentality when it comes to gaming, and due to peer pressure, they happen to relate. However, excessive gaming results in a lack of self-control, which may affect their academic performance, increase their impulsivity and aggressiveness and result in alienation from real-world interactions [1]. In many situations, massively multiplayer online role-playing games provide an online environment where several players may collaborate to complete a specific job concurrently. Under these conditions, essential skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, leadership, and cooperation are developed [2]. However, aggression and the desire to escape reality while acting might result in addiction.

During this period of adolescent life, where socialization and development are at the peak, individuals rely on the presence of peers as a crucial component of adolescent relationships. According to psychological research, teens must be welcomed in both the virtual and actual worlds. Therefore, when welcomed by their group or peers, individuals experience elation and a feeling of acceptability in society and their peer environment. Therefore, peer acceptance and relationships between players seek not just players but also friends via socialization and interpersonal connections between players and society.

The evidence for this claim is shown by analysis of teenage behaviors involved in gaming through the use of literature reviews and available data from relevant databases in order to demonstrate how they perceive the concept of participation in online gaming and connect them with experiences. The results of research conducted on the effects of online gaming as manifested by adolescent gamers around the world indicate that the perceived negative consequences of gaming addiction include decreased time and interest in other activities, lower academic performance than non-gamers, emotional distress and physical harm, and disruption of friendships with non-gaming peers [3]. Due to the fact that the majority of online games are so exciting and engaging, the majority of players' academic performance suffers as a result of their inability to complete schoolwork projects. The

majority of them believe that doing schoolwork is tedious and are disinterested in it, preferring instead to play online games with their classmates. This indicates that their performance is likely to decline as a consequence of poor time management, resulting in poor academic achievement for the majority of adolescent gamers.

2. Social Impact

Youths' physical and mental health, social, academic, cognitive, and vocational functions, are greatly impaired by their gaming addiction. Pathological gamers exhibit indicators of addiction, including tolerance, mood alteration, salience, loss of control, cover-ups, withdrawal, and endangerment of key relationships or opportunities. Consequently, the majority of teenagers suffer from pathological gaming disorders. Even though the first commercial games were produced in the early 1970s, game addiction did not emerge until the 1980s. However, the situation worsened when in-house gaming systems such as PlayStation and Xbox were created and made available to users at affordable prices. Pathological gaming is associated with serious health risks that may affect physical, mental, and social welfare. Most pathological gamers exhibit symptoms of sleeplessness, obesity, exhaustion, and mood problems, which may lead to social isolation and ineptitude [4].

Most games involving the exercise of power, aggression, and dominance attract more men than girls among teenagers. According to Mulligan and Patrovsky, games depicting violent shootings are marketed at male adolescents [5]. Therefore, young teenage guys with weak social connections and low self-esteem are targeted and susceptible to gaming addiction since the interface allows them to construct a dominant persona or profile on gaming platforms in order to get attention among their online peers. The majority of adolescent pathological gamers also have the feature of having poor academic accomplishment.

Most adolescents would rather play video games with their friends than play alone, leading to peer influence. Because of this, the majority of them play at internet cafés and play multiplayer games in venues that encourage teamwork and cooperation. Under these conditions, adolescents might create strategic coalitions to combat their game opponents. When a team member is assaulted, the other team members will band together to save them from their opponents; this deepens their social relationships. Teens like business games that encourage cooperation, collaboration, and skill development in order to win. This allows the gamers to improve their support, team spirit, and peer group identification, which aids them much throughout their teenage growth periods.

The corporative games are more social since participants play with their peers, whether they are friends or strangers. In order to play games and socialize, the majority of adolescent gamers seek out new players and friends in cybercafés. This is because most adolescent gamers utilize this chance to break the ice with strangers by creating fresh conversations and exchanging topics. The majority of teenage gamers take advantage of the possibility of connecting online to discuss their gaming experiences and methods to overcome their opponents and earn weapons as prizes [4]. Additionally, they build virtual social bonds through their online interactions, both locally and worldwide. The adolescents believe that having foreign players on their team is an accomplishment and a boost to their ego, as opposed to having real-life community mates.

The majority of adolescent pathological gamers lack problem-solving and emotional management skills. This is due to the fact that excessive gaming provides them with excitement, relaxation, and an escape from reality, difficulties, and stress. However, if teenagers do not overindulge in gaming, they might utilize it to alter their moods and bad emotions. On the other side, cognitive variables such as a skewed impression of a teen's IQ and gaming abilities might contribute to addiction or compulsive gaming. The majority of pathological gamers have a bad opinion of their social competence in interpersonal relationships but a favorable opinion of their IQ and gaming abilities. Likewise, they have a strong motivation and desire to seek out new sensations and experiences in their social lives.

Modelling may have an effect on problematic adolescent gaming. As they see their friends playing, teenagers emulate them by playing games to obtain relaxation, communicate with others, and deal

with the uncomfortable feelings they experience as they mature. The gaming system encourages most adolescents to fulfil peer expectations and pressure, which leads them to continue playing for hours in order to continue with the game. Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games, for instance [6]. These games may lead to addiction since they appear not to have an end. Therefore, adolescent gamers get emotionally duped and hooked to these games and feel compelled to continue playing, resulting in compulsive gaming.

Since the majority of adolescent gamers prefer to play games at internet cafes, where they are more likely to interact with their friends, internet cafes are the most popular venues for teenage gamers. Peer pressure is the driving force behind the expansion of gaming to internet cafés, which would lead to the emergence of pathological gaming and its accompanying diseases.

3. Social Concept

The majority of problematic adolescent gamers like violent online video games enable them to shoot freely and murder. The interface allows users to engage in incredibly violent and aggressive behaviors that are forbidden in real life, such as fighting, murdering, shooting, and assaulting, for which their peers accept and admire them. They also seek thrill and pleasure by playing violent and aggressive activities. They also choose to play these online games to waste time and get enjoyment. The majority of young gamers consider gaming to be their favorite leisure. They are confused as to how one might spend time without playing video games. Few admit and acknowledge the truth that the majority of them play online games to gain a feeling of pleasure from their gaming achievement in their everyday lives.

Through the completion of gaming tasks, acquiring points and bonuses, capturing valuables, and earning a new status and promotion from one level to the next, they get the desired sense of fulfilment. Teenage gamers are unable to control their negative emotions, manage their tension, and address problems. The majority of adolescents do not know how to cope with stress and frustration; as a result, they resort to video games to alleviate their anger and tension, resulting in a miserable and unhealthy existence. They feel that playing video games is the sole way to manage stress, despair, frustration, and fury. When they win a game, they feel joyful and successful, and their blues and problems disappear, causing them to focus more on the games in order to forget about their worries. Gamers are preoccupied with obtaining greater status and rankings in video games. As a result, people often feel smarter and cleverer when playing video games.

In the perceptions of young gamers, the lower ranks and adjustment from a lower level of the game indicate failure and weakness. The gaming platforms make use of the aspects that make teenage gamers receptive to gaming, such as the supply of enticing meal deals, unique game offers, and reasonably priced gaming vouchers. Consequently, these elements boost their gaming interest, length, and frequency. Since the majority of youthful gamers play for enjoyment, they utilize these incentives to play till bankruptcy or fatigue so long as they are having fun and are happy with their addiction. Once addicted, the special offers are discontinued. Since they lack the funds to play for the extended hours they have been used to during the offer period, they display reluctance, and the majority exhibit withdrawal symptoms like irritation, melancholy, and restlessness [7].

All adolescent gamers sense parental approbation while playing online games on home-based systems or in internet cafés. The majority of gamers are persuaded that their parents know that gaming platforms are safe, pleasant, and provide intellectual and cognitive development opportunities. The majority of young gamers persuade their parents that gaming is comparable to attending an affordable after-school program where they may mingle, play, and eat. Therefore, perceived parental acceptance plays a significant part in most adolescents' development of gaming addiction or pathological gaming. Similarly, parents are unable to adequately supervise their children's gaming frequency, duration, and expenditures since they are preoccupied with employment obligations. Due to the absence of their parents, the majority of adolescents believe they have complete control over their behavior and

engage in more gaming. Teens whose gaming is strictly regulated by their parents are likely to have a more controlled gaming experience and fewer obligations.

The mindset of gamers is heavily influenced by the type of game they are playing. Conscientiousness, for instance, is more prevalent among non-gamers than among adolescent gamers. Teenage players of RTS and racing games had a lower feeling of community than non-gamers. This implies that avid gamers have a diminished feeling of social connection in environments such as schools. They have a greater feeling of virtual community online than offline. This is due to the positive feedback they get from the online community, which gives them a greater feeling of the virtual community than in real life, resulting in their detachment from the community-based society in real life. Due to the prevalence of the internet, people interact more in the virtual world, resulting in isolation and ignorance about real-world connections. Teenagers that play arcade or shooting games are likely to have poorer self-esteem than non-gamers. Instances of poor self-esteem in gaming contribute to adolescent addiction concerns [8].

Due to the nature and setting of arcade games, players must apply manipulation or basic methods in which the result is decided by repeated actions over a brief period of time. In this genre, players experience a feeling of triumph and accomplishment more readily than in others. It explains why adolescents with poor self-esteem and an inability to fulfil real-life objectives may easily get addicted to arcade games. In contrast, RPG players had lower empathy ratings than non-gamers. The inability to comprehend others shown by the majority of RPG players has been ascribed to excessive online gaming. This is because most adolescents lack empathy, and as they spend more time online, they are deprived of opportunities to engage with people and build deep relationships in the real world. Role-playing games are strongly founded on social connections and self-awareness, according to one alternative viewpoint. Therefore, virtual engagement may considerably enhance the social lives of gamers in the real world. According to the game genre, the fundamental characteristics of FPS and RTS lead to different addiction symptoms in the majority of players [9]. This kind of gamer demonstrates more tolerance, disregard for everyday tasks, and retreat than other genre users. According to studies, the majority of users depend on rewards and accomplishments, and the social components may lead to a greater degree of game participation and addiction among users than in any other genre [8].

Since first-person shooter game genres are played from a first-person viewpoint, it influences the present, which in turn affects notions of immersion since players continually converse with one another in real-time, and the games' rich visual design and music make them more immersive. The players prefer to identify with the game genres [10]. The relationship between game genres and individual attributes is between game genres and the distinctive qualities of individual player characteristics. Role-playing games consist of motivating participation. Extroverted, amiable, and receptive to new experiences are characteristics of gamers who play role-playing games with the intention of socializing. Research demonstrates that the thinking of teenagers causes them to take greater risks than adults. This is because kids are differently attuned and think differently than adults. Consequently, students must migrate from reward-based tradeoffs to verbatim-based intuitions on the fundamental bottom line of hazardous choices. This is due to the fact that experience, culture, and context are the gist representations that establish the retrieval values that are fundamental to sound decision-making concepts.

4. Conclusion

The majority of adolescent gamers seem to comprehend the negative impacts of excessive gaming and the positive aspects of gaming activities. However, many would prefer to reduce the time or money spent on gaming owing to the accompanying risks. They would definitely compare the frequency of their addiction to that of their colleagues. This demonstrates their unwillingness to accept responsibility and their inability to regulate their gaming, despite their assertion that they can

stop playing anytime they want. However, their views of the hazards connected with gaming were low, while their impression of their control over gaming was deep.

The complexities and interaction between the gaming activity, venue, and psychological aspects contribute to the emergence of gaming-related disorders in a teenage fraternity. Therefore, from a health standpoint, the public should be made aware of the hazards and risks that are involved with gaming. Children will be able to recognize the dangers, hazards, and symptoms of addiction if they begin playing games at a young age. In addition, further study is required to comprehend better the relationship between adolescent gaming, gaming behavior, addiction, and resilience. In conclusion, the common signs of gaming addiction include a feeling of preoccupation with games, an increase in time spent when playing online with peers to achieve satisfaction, a relationship that is in jeopardy due to excessive gaming experience at internet cafes, and playing more games than originally intended. To minimize the recurrence of this issue, parental supervision and adult advice should be stressed to assist adolescents in managing their gaming experience and preventing it from becoming a disorder.

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