

Trash-Talk Among Adolescent Online Game Users As A Behavioral Change In Communication

¹Rahmadya Putra Nugraha, ²Iman Sumarlan

¹rahmadya.putra@mercubuana.ac.id

Universitas Mercu Buana, Jakarta, Indonesia

²iman.sumarlan@comm.uad.ac.id

Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia



Abstract—Indonesia has the highest cyberbullying rate in Southeast Asia. Microsoft's Digital Civility Index research shows that Indonesia ranks 29th out of 32 Asian countries in terms of civility and ranks last in Southeast Asia. Toxic cases including cyberbullying increased from 12% to 33%. Abusive words in the form of harassment also increased from 25% to 47%, indicating that the toxic level in the form of trash-talk among Indonesian internet users, including online game players, is very high and increasing quite rapidly.

This research focuses on changes in the communication behavior of online game players based on their trash-talk behavior while playing. The purpose of this study is to find out how the form of changes in communication behavior with trash-talk behavior carried out by teenagers.

This research refers to the Social Cognitive Theory by Albert Bandura. This theory explains the role of self-efficacy that causes behavior change in a person. The method used is interpretive qualitative using a phenomenological approach. The targeted output is a reputable international journal so that this research can be useful globally related to the trash-talk phenomenon.

Keywords—Trash-Talk, Online Game, Teenagers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Technological developments are increasingly spoiling its users, including gamers. One of the tangible proofs of this development produces modern games, also known as online games. Online games are games that can be played by many players through the internet network. This game can be played by more than one player simultaneously, anytime and anywhere using a device supported by an internet connection. Online games seem to have become a new lifestyle that occurs in society for some people in every circle ranging from children, teenagers to adults.

The ease of communication in the game makes the phenomenon of players who commit verbal violence in the form of trash-talk often occurs. Trash-talk is done as an attempt to boast, provoke, intimidate and even mentally bring down the opponent either through verbal words or non-verbal symbols. Trash-talk is usually used by e-sports athletes to build confidence and bring down the opponent's mentality or is usually done in competitive situations (Aicinena, 2010). The form of trash-talk communication carried out by individuals aims for personal reasons such as motivation and pleasure, as well as the purpose of disturbing the opponent (intimidation and diversion).

The act of trash-talk itself is usually spoken through a medium such as a computer or smartphone, chat-box features in games or certain applications on these media support players in communicating more easily and fun (Suraya & Mulyana, 2020). The voice chat feature can also be used to communicate not only with teammates, but to all players including the opposing team as well. Trash-talk is not only used to provoke, mock or insult, but also for fun. In a game or match, winning or losing is normal. But when playing, not wanting to lose can be a trigger for trash-talk.

Since in-game communication between individuals is done through a medium such as virtual space or cyberspace, trash-talk can be said to be a form of cyberbullying done by someone in online games in verbal form. Cyberbullying is intimidation or bullying that occurs in cyberspace. The form of cyberbullying itself is in the form of ridicule, threats, and insults that have an impact both directly and indirectly on the mentality of others. Cyberbullying generally occurs on social media. Cyberbullying is the same as bullying that occurs in general, which aims to intimidate or harass others who are considered weaker than them. The perpetrators of cyberbullying threaten or harass their targets by humiliating them through the internet media. The practice of cyberbullying in the form of trash-talk itself occurs in almost all digital platforms that can be accessed via the internet, one of which is online gaming. In cyberspace, Indonesia has the highest cyberbullying rate in Southeast Asia.

According to a Digital Civility Index research by Microsoft in 2020 reported by CNN Indonesia ranks 29th out of 32 Asian countries from the value of civility, where Indonesia is also the country with the highest level of incivility in Southeast Asia. Cases of toxicity including cyberbullying that occurred to Indonesian netizens increased from 12% to 33%. Not only that, harsh words in the form of harassment increased from 25% to 47%. This indicates that the toxic level of Indonesian internet users, including online game players, is very high and increasing quite rapidly. In recent years, online gaming has grown quite rapidly, marked by the increase in active players. Research conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association found that online games were one of the entertainment choices made by the public during the COVID-19 pandemic at 16.5 percent, above music at 15.3 percent.

From the description that has been presented above, a question arises in the mind of the researcher about why online game players carry out verbal attacks in return in the form of trash-talking against their opponents while playing. Research from Malahayati et al., (2020) regarding the impact of trash-talk found that online media can influence behavioral changes in a person. Therefore, this study will focus on changes in the behavior of online game players caused from outside because they get trash-talk from others, so there is a change in position from the victim to the trash-talk perpetrator. This research is expected to be an update of various studies on trash-talk that have existed before, especially in the perspective of Communication Science.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on existing literature studies, it is found that behavior change is caused by external influences. The form of real action in the form of behavior from individuals can be measured directly with the five senses and can be assessed directly by others (Ramdhani, Prijana, & Rodiah, 2017). Before behaving, individuals will try to find out whether their behavior will be thought of by others, whether others will approve or disapprove of it (Bavel et al., 2020). Communication that occurs between individuals produces a process in the form of cause and effect that is interrelated with one another (Zis, Effendi, & Roem, 2021). It is this cause-and-effect reaction that ultimately forms a series of one's behavior in accordance with what has been agreed upon.

Previous studies that discuss related to communicator messages that can change communicant behavior, one of which is a message containing trash-talk. Trash-talk is characterized as toxic and uncivilized behavior carried out by someone who can have a negative impact such as unethical behavior habits in the perpetrator (Yip, Schweitzer, & Nurmohamed, 2018). This emergent behavior can explore contextual elements that can help in inhibiting toxic behavior, and conversely can turn others toxic as well (Kou, 2020). Provocation in the form of trash-talk can bring out the ego in a person to retaliate (Zikrillah, Padiatra, Gunawan, Setiawan, & Muttaqin, 2021).

i. Interpersonal Communication

In a family, interpersonal communication can be declared effective if the parent meeting can provide comfort or something that is very pleasant for the child. If there is openness between parents and children in interpersonal communication of a family, the first thing parents have to do is creating a comfortable atmosphere so that children do not feel tense when communicating with parents.

In his book entitled "The Interpersonal Communication Book", 11th ed, DeVito defines interpersonal communication as:

"The communication that takes place between two persons who have an established relationship; the people are in some way connected" (DeVito, 2008).

Smooth interpersonal relationship indicates the stage of how far the consequences of one's behavior are as expected. When someone interacts with other people, he usually wants to create a certain impression, or cause certain emotional reactions in other

people. Sometimes people react to behavior in ways that are very different than expected. Effectiveness in interpersonal relationship is determined by the ability to clearly communicate what is being conveyed, create the desired impression, or influence other people as desired

Mulyana (2014) explains that interpersonal communication is communication between people who come face to face, allowing each participant to capture other people's reactions directly, either verbally or non-verbally. Interpersonal communication is communication that involves only two people, such as husband and wife, two colleagues, two close friends, teacher-students and so on. Based on Tubbs and Moss, besides as the most effective communication model, interpersonal communication is human communication that has the closest relationship.

Two-person communication events include nearly all informal and pleasant talk, the everyday conversations we have from the moment we wake up in the morning until we go back to bed. Dyadic communication is also defined as communication that includes the closest human relationship, for example communication between two people who love each other (Sugiyono, Moleong, Stewart L., Moss, & Littlejohn, 2009)

Trash-talking Behavior as a Form of Behavior Change in the Concept of Self-efficacy

One form of interpersonal communication that occurs between individuals is in the form of trash-talk spoken by communicators to communicants. Trash-talk is a relatively new term as a form of communication in the broad scope of research on human nature (Kniffin & Palacio, 2018). According to (Conmy, Tenenbaum, Eklund, Roehrig, & Filho, 2013), trash-talk is a form of communication that is intentionally carried out by individuals for personal reasons whether it is for motivation or pleasure, which also aims to bully by intimidation and distraction.

Trash-talking is one example of a negative action of misusing communication facilities in online games. Furthermore, this behavior is emphasized as one of the characteristics of toxic players. The word toxic comes from English which means poison. According to Mustofa (2018), toxic is a behavior that can intentionally damage other people's playing comfort. Toxic players are game players who ruin the whole game. Toxic behavior can have a significant impact if the toxic player actually affects others in a negative way (Blackburn & Kwak, 2014).

Self-efficacy is the ability to plan and carry out actions that lead to the achievement of specific goals regarding how well the self can function in certain situations (Alwisol, 2019). Self-efficacy is related to the belief in oneself about one's ability whether oneself has certain abilities in performing expected actions such as good or bad actions, right or wrong, and can or cannot do something. Belief in the abilities that each individual has will affect how each individual reacts to certain situations and conditions they experience (Bandura, Freeman, & Lightsey, 1999).

ii. Online Games as a Means of Cyberbullying

Online games are a type of game that can be played together with players who are connected to the internet. This game is a video game played through a computer network using personal computers, game consoles, or other devices such as smartphones and tablets that are connected to the same network (Surbakti, 2017). With the advancement of internet technology, it allows everyone to play the same game on each of their devices with time-sharing capabilities so as to form multiplayer games with large numbers at the same time.

Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs on electronic platforms, especially those involving internet users in cyberspace (Saarinen, 2017). According to (Rusyidi, 2020), cyberbullying is easier to do than conventional violence because the perpetrator does not need to deal directly with other people who are victims. Cyberbullying in the form of taunts, threats, and insults intends to hurt others to have an impact both directly and indirectly on the mentality of others. It is said that this is because the aggressive behavior of cyberbullying itself is carried out by users repeatedly by someone when using technology as a means (Mitchell, Wolak, & Finkelhor, 2007). Cyberbullying can occur due to communication carried out with other people who also rely on the ability to express, because expression clarifies the meaning of the information conveyed.

III. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach and has descriptive characteristics. The data collected is first directly from the source, the researcher becomes part of the main instrument of analysis, secondly the data is in the form of words in sentences or pictures that have meaning (Sutopo, 2006). The type of research used in this study is phenomenology. Phenomenology explains the structure of consciousness in human experience. The phenomenological approach seeks to let reality reveal itself naturally. Through "stimulating questions", the research subject is allowed to tell all kinds of dimensions of his experience related to a phenomenon/event (Aspers, 2009).

The determination of criteria is based on the topic under study, which is related to the life experiences experienced by a group. The researcher determines informants who play together as long as the play group, which is 2 years and the intensity of play starts from 3 to 4 hours per day because the informants have more experience from playing together intensely, so they are considered the most knowledgeable related to the phenomenon under study.

1. Young people residing in Indonesia with an age range of 18 to 21 years old.
2. Actively playing together for at least 2 years
3. Intensity of playing online games 3 to 4 hours

IV. RESULT

A. Factors of Change in Adolescent Communication Behavior Due to Online Games

Trash-talk is a form of communication that can refer to changes in individual attitudes and character. Online game players can sometimes feel the undue words that have been thrown by their playing opponents. This refers to the online game being played by the player, where trash-talk and aggressive behavior are verbal forms or words. Forms of verbally aggressive behavior include insults, scolding, cursing, slurs, mockery, and others that are classified as verbal activities (Sukatini, Mutaqin, Astuti, Widyaningsih, 2023). So, it can be understood that there are many ways that can be verbally aggressive in online game play, namely by making direct or indirect contact with opponents. playing.

Trash-talking is a form of aggressive verbalization in communication, which can affect the communication, which can affect the discomfort of other players, both friends and opponents, making someone unable to communicate. friends or opponents, making someone unable to control emotions. The inability of adolescents to understand the concept of social situations makes them vulnerable to negative behavior, breaking rules and manners, and manners. This leads them to aggressive behavior. aggressive behavior. The teenage informants seemed to have no sense of responsibility in using the online gaming facilities available to them. Based on the data that has been obtained in the field through interviews with several informants, explaining that the motivation of players to play is to find fun, excitement and unwind. fatigue. This means that it can be said that playing online games is actions that contain pleasure that are carried out according to self-will without any coercion from other parties with the aim of obtaining happiness while doing the activity (Ahmadiyya, 2011). obtaining happiness while doing the activity (Hurlock, 2011).

Trash-talk actions motivated by anger, hurt and revenge due to frustration were found to be revenge due to frustration was found from the results of participant observations followed by the researcher. participated in by the researcher. First, trash-talk arises when a teammate's player is more ego-centered and did not listen to other players when being set up. strategy. Then the informant explained that the player do trash-talk to express themselves. Forms of expression such as anger and defeat when killed cause hurt and revenge on opposing players. Second, thirst for power by accentuating the ego so that it hurts others is found from the results of participant observation followed by researchers, trash-talk appears when there is one selfish player in a team, this selfishness certainly harms other players or their teammates. one team. According to (Fariz, 2019), selfish player characters are included in one of the internal factors that cause trash-talk behavior. in one of the internal factors that cause trash-talk behavior. Players in team and opponents who have a selfish character, are impatient, do not want to be given advice or input, and act as if they are not in the game. given advice or input, and act at will will trigger trash-talk behavior. the occurrence of trash-talk behavior. Third, feeling bored is found from the results of observations made by researchers, where trash-talk arises when players feel bored in the game. players feel bored in the game. Players who are bored waiting or not finding enemies. It is in moments like that that players do trash-talk to reduce this boredom. Fourth, the motivation for players to trash-talk is for sheer entertainment in order to laugh or get a reaction, found from informants through laugh at or get a reaction, found from informants through interview who

explained that trash-talk was done just for entertainment so that the game felt more exciting, the game feels more exciting. Fifth, inadvertence in the form of impulsive and emotional reactions/comments was found from observation. impulsive and emotional reactions/comments were found from the participant observation that was followed by the researcher, trash-talk appears when the player fails to kill the opponent or the player is killed then the trash-talk reaction appears because of this.

B. The Effect of Cognition on Trash-Talking Behavior

In this study, some of the data showed the influence of cognition on the trash-talking behavior of online game players in adolescence. Each informant's view of the situation they face in an online game match played by players is different. Through the informants' experience while playing online games, they think that in every match there will be trash-talking, so they start every match with the expectation of trash-talking. Informants who are teenagers with an age range of 21 to 22 years are still in the transition stage from adolescence to adulthood. In this phase, they are considered to still have immature perspectives and thoughts. Characteristics personal, the level of maturity of informants also play a role in this, informants who are emotionally immature have a tendency to take negative actions such as trash-talking. to take negative actions such as trash-talking, informants are also not yet able to correctly assess the good-bad of can correctly assess the good and bad of their actions, and what the impact. Cognitive is the shaping of a concept involves thinking and understanding processes (Mansur, Saragih, Ritonga, & Damayanti, 2021). Differences in the informants' perspectives and understanding of the match certainly also gave rise to different motivations for trash-talking.

Researchers in understanding the trash-talking that appears can be divided into two categories. First, is to seek satisfaction or entertainment. In this case, the informants are more interested in venting their emotions or seek pleasure by insulting their opponents. Second, is to improve game performance or strategic reasons. strategic reasons. Informants who have this reason tend to play serious and aiming for victory, for this reason, often trash-talking that is has a strategic intent in it. There are similarities and differences in trash-talking behaviors that arise when research informants play online games. Similarities in behavior is the aggressive behavior of the players, especially when playing with their own close friends. The difference in the informants' behavior is the forms of provocation to the opponent. It depends on how they respond to the situation and how they assess the game situation. The influence of the social environment is also very large on the behavior of informants who are in adolescence, joining teenagers in a community or play group can have an influence on their perspective and behavior. Differences in perspective and informants' perspectives and understanding of matches in online games, of course also give rise to different motivations for trash-talking. The difference in motivation in playing online games influences on the informants' trash-talking behavior. In Social Cognitive Theory, it is explained that individuals acquire knowledge, rules, beliefs and attitudes by observing other people who become their models. who become their models. After seeing and learning the behaviors of the model, individuals then act according to their beliefs about their abilities and the expected results of the model. about their abilities and the expected results of their actions (Bandura et al., 1999).

The difference can be seen in their trash-talking behavior when they are in winning and losing positions. behavior when they are in winning and losing positions. Both will have differences because their trash-talking motivations when they are in winning and losing positions are also different.

C. The Impact of Online Games on the Formation of Self Efficacy

Online games can shape cognitive roles, which can cause the impact of self-efficacy, which is various forms of human behavior that are regulated by thinking to realize a goal. human behavior that is regulated by thinking to realize a certain goal and in the form of values, affirming one's goals are influenced by self-efficacy. and in the form of value, affirming one's goals is influenced by self-thinking about capacity and commitment to that goal. Regarding the cognitive role of trash talk that is the most important or most important social change and all beings or circumstances play a role influence on success in human functioning. Individuals self-organizing, proactive, self-regulating, and self-reflecting. themselves. They are not spectators of their behavior, but they are contributors to their lives. are contributors to their lives.

Trash-talking is one example of the negative actions of misuse of communication facilities in online games. Furthermore, this behavior is affirmed as one of the characteristics of toxic players. When one of the one of the players trash-talks, then it can be concluded that the player is included in the characteristics of toxic players because it can damage or interfere with the comfort of other players while playing the game. Self-efficacy or self-efficacy refers to the belief in the extent to which a person is able to estimate his ability to carry out or carry out tasks needed to achieve certain results. Belief in these abilities include self-confidence, ability to self-adjustment, cognitive capacity, intelligence and capacity to act in stressful situations. in stressful situations.

Self-efficacy will gradually develop continuously as abilities increase and related experiences increase (Ormrod, 2009). A person's effort to trash-talk back to an opponent who trash-talks first is a form of self-efficacy that is influenced by others in the play environment. This self-efficacy is formed from the outside, namely the words spoken by others. Then departing from that experience, the individual considers that his failure in the game came from the toxic person who became his opponent. People who are psychologically or emotionally disturbed then attack their opponents with trash-talk as a form of self-efficacy that positions their opponents as models whose behavior they imitate.

Researchers see that self-efficacy affects whether a person thinks about how to strengthen in certain circumstances or situations regarding the adaptation environment, how well they motivate themselves and persevere in the situation, well they motivate themselves and persevere in the face of adversity; the quality of their emotional life, and their choice to make decisions at key points that govern decisions at key points that govern the course of life. It is It can be understood that self-efficacy can determine a person's act of trash-talking, and how much effort is put into cultivate self-character. The researcher's analysis refers to the theory delivered by (Mukhid, 2018) who summarized the four main sources that influence self-efficacy according to Albert Bandura, namely mastery or persistent experience, self-experience, persuasion or social demands. experience, social persuasion or demands, and the psychological or emotional state of the individual. emotions of the individual. In addition, the formation of self-efficacy is very important for a person, how people behave. a person, how people behave in a certain situation depends on social interactions that influence each other. depends on social interactions that influence each other between environment with cognitive conditions, especially the cognitive role itself. The self-efficacy process according to Bandura et al., (1999) outlines that there are 4 psychological processes that occur when self-efficacy affects human functioning and is carried out to realize goals that are considered human functions and is carried out to realize goals that individuals consider valuable. The four processes are cognitive processes, motivational processes, affective process, and selection process.

V. CONCLUSION

Trash-talk that appears can be divided into two categories. First, is to seek satisfaction or entertainment. In this case, informants are more interested in venting their emotions or looking for fun by insulting their opponents. Emotional outbursts here include reflex expressions because they are carried away by the situation when playing, as well as trash-talk that is deliberately directed at others in order to cause conflict between players, disagreement, controversy, and opposition. The second reason is to improve game performance or strategic reasons. Informants who have this reason tend to play seriously and aim for victory, for this reason, trash-talking often has a strategic purpose in it. So, it can be concluded that trash-talk is a negative action for both gamers and other individuals if they are often accustomed to the habit of trash-talk both in the world of games, social media, and daily life which can trigger changes in the behavior of players such as: easily emotional, selfish, rude speech, insulting and cursing someone. This is reflected in the reaction of players who reply to other players' trash-talk with trash-talk as well. This habit forms a bad personality by informants and causes changes in player communication behavior from non-toxic to toxic when playing.

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