

# Psychoeducation for Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD): Prevention of Online Game Addiction through Offline Games

Nurmalia, Lutfiah Yuliani, Dwi Fitri Abdi Makino, Hanifah Fatikasari, Katrim Alifa Putrikita\*

*Psychology Study Program, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

*Corresponding author: [katrim@mercubuana-yogya.ac.id](mailto:katrim@mercubuana-yogya.ac.id)*

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## ABSTRACT

Online games become an inseparable part of teenagers' lives. However, playing online games continuously will lead the gamers to addiction and other negative impacts. It is important for adolescents to comprehend the risks associated with online game addiction. In regard to this situation, psychoeducation on the dangers of online games and the importance of offline games was conducted to adolescents. The purpose of this psychoeducation is to provide a new understanding and insight to individuals, especially teenagers, about the symptoms, causes, impacts and how to overcome online game addiction by providing references to offline games. The participants of this psychoeducation were 10 high school students. The results reveal that there is an increase in knowledge in all participants. The increase in knowledge can be seen through the pre-test & post-test results. After psychoeducation, participants are indicated to have better knowledge related to online game addiction (internet gaming disorder). In addition, participants also know the benefits of offline games.

## Introduction

Adolescence is a transition period from children to adulthood which includes socio-emotional, cognitive, and also biological aspects, while the key to this adolescent developmental task is preparation for adulthood which depends on how effective preparation is in adolescence (Santrock, 2023). Hurlock (Rais, 2022) categorized adolescence into two categories: early adolescence and late adolescence. Early adolescence starts from the age of 11 to 12 years old until around 16 to 17 years old, while late adolescence starts around the age of 16 to 17 years old and it ends around the age of 18 years old.

In the modern era, social communities, adolescents almost use the internet to interact at all times because they can connect to anyone without worrying about the distance and

time. It has led them to dependence on the existence of mobile phones, even more willing to leave the wallet behind than to leave the mobile phone behind. It is because when they are not using a mobile phone, they think the world becomes dark and separated from the outside world (Vera & Netrawati, 2019).

A common activity among adolescents on their mobile phones is playing online games. Adolescents are drawn to online games due to the gratification and enjoyment they derive from playing. Games that previously were played in a physical setting, they are now more often played digitally. When adolescents are already addicted to playing online games, it is likely to affect the social aspects of adolescents' daily activities. As a result of the amount of time adolescents spend surfing in cyberspace, it can lead to a lack of interaction with family and people in real life (Jalil et al., 2020).

Some interviews conducted with teachers and parents reveal that the majority of students engage in online gaming. Teachers reported that many students are addicted to their mobile phones, making it difficult for them to detach from online games. Furthermore, interviews with high school students indicated that there is a particular enjoyment derived from playing online games, which makes it hard for them to stop. The school, particularly the teachers, have attempted to change these habits; however, controlling gadget usage among students has proven challenging. Additionally, online gaming impacts students' activities at school, leading to difficulties in time management, decreased focus during educational activities, and other issues related to students' inability to regulate their activities (Aziz et al., 2021).

Online games have led teenagers to lose interest in offline games, despite the fact that offline games promote physical activity and decrease mobile phone use. A study conducted by Al Qadri & Khair Afif (2023) related to traditional games and digital literacy aimed at reducing online game addiction in Pantai Cermin Village found that participants showed increased enthusiasm for the activities. Additionally, they gained awareness about the dangers of online games and were able to engage successfully in traditional games.

Based on the discussion above, it is important to solve the problem of Internet Gaming Disorder in adolescents. What can be done is to provide more understanding through psychoeducational literacy as both prevention by providing the impact and preventive actions of online game addiction and promotion by providing the solution to reduce the intensity of online game play by switching to offline games.

The purpose of this intervention is to enhance understanding among individuals, particularly adolescents, regarding the symptoms, causes, impacts, and management of online game addiction by introducing them to offline games. Additionally, the intervention also aims to educate participants about the early signs of online game addiction in order to facilitate early detection and encourage alternative activities, such as offline games. This approach seeks to reduce the prevalence of online game addiction through educational and preventive strategies.

## **Method**

This psychoeducation session was conducted on July 3, 2024, at Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta. The session lasted 120 minutes and was attended by 10 high school students. Previously, on pre-session, participants completed a knowledge test scale as a pre-test for data collection. The session covered various topics, including the definition and characteristics of online game addiction, its negative impacts, and tips for prevention, and the benefits of offline games. The content was supported by case news videos highlighting the dangers of online game addiction, animations depicting children's situations in online game addiction environments, and the consequences of such addiction. After the presentation, the facilitators conducted an ice-breaking activity to help participants stretch and enhance their focus. Following the educational material, participants engaged in prevention activities, including attention-switching exercises such as playing offline games like Uno Stacko and Straw Tower. At the end of the session, participants completed the knowledge test scale as a post-test for data collection.

## **Results and Discussion**

### *Results*

This psychoeducation was conducted for 120 minutes. The activity was attended by 10 participants. The Participants were given material on the definition, characteristics, negative impacts, prevention tips, and benefits of playing offline games. This session was also filled with several discussions and video shows. The next session was followed by ice breaking and the last session was offline games and evaluation of activities.

### *Session 1: Discussion*

This activity was performed by asking several questions and giving activity about case studies to students. 1) What is internet gaming disorder? (2) How are people addicted to online games? (3) Can offline games reduce online game addiction?. Furthermore, it was kept

on with Case study questions, such as: (1) According to the participants, when teenagers play online games all the times, and only break playing when eating and sleeping, does that include online game addiction? (2) According to the participants, if there is someone who is the same as the first case, but the online game is also recorded and uploaded on social media such as TikTok, YouTube and others for certain reasons, does that include online game addiction too?. The results of the discussion can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. Result of The Discussion**

| No | Question   | The Result of Discussion  |
|----|--|---|
| 1  | What is internet gaming disorder?  | <i>Internet gaming disorder</i> is an addiction to playing online games, that causes ignorance of many task in real life  |
| 2  | How are people addicted to online games?   | Someone who is addicted to online games usually doesn't like socializing, doesn't care about tasks, and has lots of mobile phones   |
| 3  | Can offline games reduce online game addiction?  | I can't work because someone who is addicted will usually keep thinking about it, making it difficult for them to let go.   |
| 4. | (Case study)<br>According to the participants, when teenagers play online games all the times, and only break playing when eating and sleeping, does that include online game addiction?   | Yes, it is an addiction to online games because they do not control the time to play and it interferes with daily activities and even learning activities.  |
| 5. | (Case study)<br>According to the participants, if there is someone who is the same as the first case, but the online game is also recorded and uploaded on social media such as TikTok, YouTube and others for certain reasons, does that include online game addiction too? | It depends on how they do their daily activities, if their daily activities are still fine, especially if they do it as a business opportunity because of their work as an online game streamer then it is not entirely to be blamed. But, it also depends on how they like their work and whether they still communicate with their environment or are completely tied to the virtual world. |

### *Session 2: Psychoeducation*

Psychoeducation activities related to online game addiction in adolescents. Before starting the material, the facilitators showed a news story where a student died because of playing online games excessively. This video is expected to stimulate students' enthusiasm that the material to be delivered is very useful. The psychoeducation material provides information to students about the definition of online game addiction, why adolescents can be

more addicted to online games, the characteristics of online game addiction such as playing the same game for more than 3 hours a day, willing to spend a lot of money, playing games for more than 1 month, having friends or communities of fellow game lovers, inviting people around them to join in playing online games, feeling enthusiastic when asked about online game problems, spending time on playing online games at hours outside of school hours, and often falling asleep at school and skipping schoolwork. These activities can be seen in Figure 1.



**Figure. 1. Psychoeducation**

During psychoeducation, there were students who shared experiences related to online game addiction that they had experienced. This activity can be seen in Figure 3. Students shared their experiences when they were in a situation of online game addiction and students shared the signs that they experienced according to the characteristics presented by the facilitators. The facilitators explained the negative impact in terms of healthy, psychological, academic, financial, and social aspects, and provides tips on how to overcome the problems which consists of parental monitoring, education, resource restriction, attention switching, and playing offline games. Afterwards, the facilitators explained the benefits of offline games.

A video was played related to the animation of a person who was busy in playing games. After the screening, the facilitators asked students to express their opinions about whether the situation looked fun or the opposite. The students answered that the situation was very unpleasant. The facilitator afterwards showed a video about the animation of the consequences of online game addiction. The animation explained the general consequences that were common in students. Finally, the third video was airing about the dangers of online game addiction based on doctor pedia. the activity can be seen in Figure 2.



**Figure. 2. Video Views**



**Figure. 3. Shared Experiences**

#### *Session 3: Ice Breaking*

Ice breaking activity was done to train focus and as a refreshment for participants so that they could still enjoy the whole session until the end. This process was conducted with the facilitators by giving small games to the participants. The facilitators asked participants to follow what was said instead of what was held. The facilitators asked participants to hold their body parts while the facilitator pointed to other body parts that were different from what was said. It was expected to make participants more excited and more focused in paying attention to other activities. The activity can be seen in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Ice Breaking**

#### *Session 4: Offline Games*

Offline game was conducted to enable participants to reduce online gaming. The facilitators provided two games. The first game was to build a tower using straws. In this game, participants were divided into two groups. Each group were given some straws, they were asked to arrange the straws as high as possible. The activity can be seen in Figure 5.



**Figure 5. Straw Tower Games**

The second game was Uno Stacko. The facilitators provided Uno Stacko. In this game, the participants were also divided into two groups. Each of the groups was asked to build blocks. After the blocks were built, each member next was asked to pick up one block and keep the block from falling. The activity can be seen in Figure 6.



**Figure 6. Uno Stacko Games**

Groups that successfully won in the game were praised by rewards, which was food. It aimed to reward groups of students who were enthusiastic and eager to win in playing game, so that it made students feel valued and more excited.

After the games, the facilitators provided a reflection on the experience of the activities carried out including: (1) What things are obtained from the game? (2) Are offline games fun? (3) Can offline games be used as a means to reduce online game addiction?. The process of students' discussion can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. The Results of The Discussion about Offline Games**

| Questions   | The Results of Discussion   |
|---|---|
| What things are obtained from the game?                               | Offline game play can be an idea as a form of diversion from online game play. The negative impact of offline games is very low compared to online games. 2 games that have been played can be applied in everyday life.            |
| Are offline games fun?  | Offline games are fun compared to online games, especially when played together. Offline games provide benefits such as practicing focus, practicing eye-hand coordination, saving budget, and increasing creativity.               |
| Can offline games be used as a means to reduce online game addiction? | Offline games can be used as a way to reduce online game addiction. It is because when playing offline games and when applied it is very fun to forget about online games that usually become a habit and think of the online game. |

### *Evaluation*

Evaluation of psychoeducation was conducted before and after psychoeducation activities. Based on pre-test measurements done before psychoeducation, the mean value was 6.4 and the standard deviation (SD) value was 2.17 and the mean rank is 63.5. After the post-test at the end of the activity, the mean was 8.7 and the standard deviation (SD) value was 1.76, there was a difference in the mean value of 2.3, while the mean rank increased to 83.5. The non-parametric statistical test of the Wilcoxon signed ranks test obtained an asymp. Sig (2-tailed) of 0.0002. This value is smaller than 0.05, so it means that there is a significant difference in learning outcomes. The psychoeducation activities succeeded in increasing knowledge about online game addiction. These results can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3. Before and After Score of Psychoeducation**

| No | Name | Before Psychoeducation | After Psychoeducation |
|----|------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1  | A    | 9                      | 10                    |
| 2  | MRY  | 9                      | 10                    |
| 3  | G    | 6                      | 8                     |
| 4  | H    | 7                      | 8                     |
| 5  | F    | 3                      | 10                    |
| 6  | AM   | 4                      | 10                    |
| 7  | VIP  | 4                      | 10                    |
| 8  | ABTM | 7                      | 9                     |
| 9  | N    | 9                      | 10                    |
| 10 | TAS  | 4                      | 10                    |

Table 3 shows that the ten participants in this activity all experienced a significant increase in scores when compared to before the psychoeducation on internet gaming disorder



(online game addiction). It indicates that the psychoeducation is effective in increasing students' knowledge about internet gaming disorder.

### *Discussion*

Adolescents who frequently play online games are more likely to engage in unhealthy lifestyles, including poor diet, lack of physical activity and irregular sleep. Psychoeducation is an effective approach in changing these behaviours by providing relevant information and building skills in preventing unhealthy behaviours (Zajac et al., 2020). Therefore, "Psychoeducation for Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD): Prevention of Online Game Addiction Through Offline Games" was conducted to address the problem of online game addiction.

Based on the entire process of psychoeducation, it can be seen that all participants were actively involved and fully understood the process. In the discussion process, a question and answer process were carried out where the facilitators provided feedback and explained further the questions that had been addressed. Through this activity, participants became more understanding and active in the psychoeducation process. In the presentation session, participants got to know more about online game addiction, the characteristics of someone who is affected by online game addiction, and tips on how to overcome it. It was expected that participants can know themselves and their surroundings and can perform first aid as a way to overcome or deal with someone who has been addicted to online games. According to research conducted by Tas & Ayas (2018), providing knowledge about online games and their impact is an important element in dealing with the problem of online game addiction. Thus, it is expected to help adolescents reduce the habit of playing online games.

In the offline game session, all participants were enthusiastic and played the games seriously. Experience reflection was also conducted on the offline game process. It led participants to a better understanding of the importance of offline games and their positive impacts including those are related to online games addiction. Based on the psychoeducation process, it can be seen that the provision of knowledge, the prevention of online games such as attention switching through offline games, and the activeness of participants during the training process support the improvement of knowledge and skills. Attention switching has been shown to significantly distract adolescents from online games and reduce the risk of online game addiction (Xu et al., 2012).

The results of qualitative and quantitative data analysis showed that there was an increase in knowledge and skills of participants before and after psychoeducation was conducted. The ten participants in this activity all experienced a significant increase in scores

when compared to before the psychoeducation on internet gaming disorder (online game addiction). It signifies that this psychoeducation is effective as a means of increasing students' knowledge about internet gaming disorder or online game addiction. In line with it, a research conducted by Söylemez & Ayas (2023) showed that psychoeducation-based interventions had a significant effect on reducing game addiction. In addition, participants were also able to practice offline gaming as a way to prevent online gaming addiction.

## **Conclusion**

Based on Internet Gaming Disorder psychoeducation, it assumedly can be an alternative to prevent Internet Gaming Disorder (online game addiction) in adolescents. It is seen to be able to provide insight and knowledge and experience to adolescents regarding the online game addiction. Increased students' knowledge can make adolescents avoid the negative impact of online game addiction. It can be seen from the pre-test and post-test scores which have increased. The offline games, such as tower of straws and uno stacko can be used as a reference to reduce online game addiction. This offline game is expected to increase the attachment between students and their family, friends or surroundings. For parents and teachers, it is aimed that they can provide other positive activity ideas and can apply other prevention tips besides attention switching. One of those is offline game play as a means of overcoming online game addiction so that online game addiction can decrease significantly again.

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