



(MUDIMA)



## The Impact of Digital Communication on UMSU Student in Game Online

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out the impact of digital communication on UMSU students in playing online games. The online game that is the focus of the research is Mobile Legend, because Mobile Legend is the most popular online game in Asia, especially in Indonesia with several users of up to 50 million active users. The research method is descriptive qualitative with research informants who are UMSU students who actively play mobile legends using observation, interviews, and documentation as data collection techniques, as well as data analysis techniques using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion verification. The research results show that there are negative and positive impacts from UMSU students' digital communication in playing mobile legend online games. The negative impact is that students become more emotional easily it carries over into everyday life, and the positive impact is that students make new friends even outside the city and province. So, to anticipate the negative impacts of digital communication, students are expected to have media literacy skills

## **INTRODUCTION**

Advances in communication and information technology present various new technologies for communication, one of which is a smartphone connected to the internet network. With a smartphone and internet access, a person can do everything, from communicating and searching for information, to playing online games (Ismi & Akmal, 2020; Mertika & Mariana, 2020).

Online games are games that are connected to an internet network and can be played anywhere, at any time, and online games can be played in groups or individually (Ardinata et al., 2022; Nasution et al., 2022; Prayuda et al., 2020).

Online games are very popular with people of all ages, from children to adults, including students, and even have an impact on social activities and school performance.

Online games have become popular in recent years, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on Wijman's data, in 2020 the number of online game users will reach up to 2.8 billion active users in the world (Dananjaya & Kusumastuti, 2019).

In Indonesia, one of the most popular and popular online games is the game made by the Moonton company, where active users or players of the Mobile Legends online game have reached 50 million active users. Mobile legends are popular because this game focuses on individual and group play in facing opponents to compete to achieve a goal (Fox et al., 2018).

Users or fans of mobile legends are very interested in a ranking that must be pursued when playing this game. So, players will compete to target the ranking level they will achieve in each game. The ranking levels they must achieve starting from the lowest, namely Warrior, Elite, Master, and Grandmaster, to the highest, namely Epic, Legend, Mytic, and Mytical Glory.

The development of mobile legend games is quite rapid because it not only prioritizes playing skills but also how relationships and communication are built between players so that players can find comfort in playing the game.

Therefore, this research focuses on online games that are of interest to the public, especially students, namely the online game Mobile Legends.

Later, this research aims to find out the impact of the mobile legends online game, especially on students at the Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra.

## **METHODS**

This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods that explain and analyze phenomena, events, social dynamics, and perceptions. The research informants are students at the Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra who actively play the online game Mobile Legends every day. Data collection techniques use observation, interviews, and documentation, as well as data analysis techniques using data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusions (Creswell, 2017).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Mobile Legend was developed by a gaming company in China, namely Moonton. Moonton was assisted by a developer to develop the game, the developer is the Shanghai Moonton Technology Corporation. These two large companies collaborated to produce an online game called Mobile Legends.

Mobile Legends is an game online that is designed to be played using a smartphone in general. However, mobile legends can also be played using computer devices (Nuzuli et al., 2023).

Mobile legend is designed with a 5 versus 5 team game where each team is required to set a strategy to defend its base and set a strategy to destroy the opponent's base.

Based on various interview results, on average informants play mobile legends online games in one day for up to 5-6 hours. And for one game, they can play around four games or the equivalent of 1 hour.

There are negative and positive impacts that arise from playing Mobile Legends. The negative impact emerged from one informant stating that Mobile Legend made him stay up late or had trouble sleeping at night, then made him sleepy while attending lectures, and even forgot to do his lecture assignments because he enjoyed playing Mobile Legend too much.

As stated by (Ulya et al., 2021) a lot of time playing online games can change and make a person's behavior lazy and irresponsible.

Informants said that playing mobile legends can make a person addicted and can even cause health problems, emotional disorders, and mental problems. This is supported by the results of the research revealed by (Muckromin & Dewi Wulandari, 2022; Naya & Amalia, 2023) that addiction and playing mobile legends excessively can disrupt a person's emotions, making a person angry which carries over into their daily activities.

This is in line with what was stated by (Bangun et al., 2021) that if a mobile legend player experiences defeat while playing, it will hurt their individual life, namely, it is easy to say harsh words or insults to someone in real life, even saying harsh words is considered normal. only if you have done it often in the game.

However, mobile legends have various positive impacts. The positive impact of digital communication in Mobile Legends is increasing relationships and friends. From the results of interviews with informants, it was stated that by interacting and communicating in the Mobile Legends game, they made new friends, even from different cities, provinces, and even different countries. Several informants also said that initially they had few friends, either in person or online, but with Mobile Legends, they made new friends and joined a Mobile Legends community.

Digital communication in mobile legends built by players can be done by communicating verbally and non-verbally. If you carry out verbal communication, Mobile Legends players use text messages, the feature of which is provided by Mobile Legends, provided that the verbal communication is carried out by paying attention to the applicable rules and regulations. Meanwhile, if you are communicating non-verbally, players can simply use stickers or emoticons which are also provided by Mobile Legends.

Verbal or nonverbal communication is an effective way for teams to win the game. This was also expressed by (Almutazam & Irman, 2022) that effective communication is communication that is carried out either verbally or non-verbally so that the

results resulting from the communication are by what is desired.

The impacts of digital communication that arise from playing mobile legends, whether positive or negative, are of concern to players, especially mobile legend players, and students at the Muhammadiyah University of Sumatra. The negative impacts arising from mobile legends can be anticipated with media literacy skills.

Media literacy is one of the basic abilities for someone in navigating the virtual world, including online games. Media literacy is a person's ability to evaluate, analyze, and select the content of media messages. Media literacy skills are also known as media literacy (Hidayat et al., 2023; Hidayat & Lubis, 2021).

By having media literacy skills, students can filter out all negative impacts and are not even affected by the negative things that arise from mobile legend games. Media literacy is also one way to make mobile legend players wiser in playing online games so that they are not included in the category of someone who is addicted to online games or even has the impact of giving rise to mental health diseases.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research concludes that the impact of digital communication on the Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra students when playing mobile legend online games has both negative and positive impacts. The negative impact is that students tend to be lazy, have trouble sleeping at night, and don't do their assignments. However, the positive impact of digital communication is increasing friendships both online and in person.

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