Online Gaming: Exploratory of the Communication Process and Current Scenario of Virtual Community Development

Muhammad Hafizuddin Fakhrullah Zakaria, Anuar Ali, Ahlam Aziz

University Teknologi MARA
Email: hafizrahim981@gmail.com, anuar0688@uitm.edu.my, ahlam@uitm.edu.my

Abstract
Online gaming activity has become a rather phenomenal practices and also has turned out to be one of today's mostly adopted lifestyle especially amongst the youths or younger generations. As online gaming community emerged rampantly along with modern day's growing interest in online gaming activity amongst youths' population, this leads to a notion that the element of interaction within the online gaming community were more than just being "limited" to the virtual world. Instead, the form of interactions within these virtual online gaming communities had rather shifted into interpersonal processes which are bringing and connecting millions of online gamers across the globe even closer despite the geographical boundaries. As a matter of fact, it is from this phenomenon of online gaming and emergence of various virtual gaming communities that has eventually led to the formation of other social activities such as eSports, specific-gaming fanbases, game conferences and distinguished sub-cultures. However, with the rapid development in terms of social paradigms pertaining the online gaming communities, there is also a concern pertaining gender disparities, inequalities and conflicts between male and female gamers despite the preliminary assumptions that online gaming activities are contributing towards social solidarity and interaction which formed the existence of virtual communities. Some of the questions posed in understanding this online gaming community formation based on the social paradigms are how does the social interaction in the online gaming activities occurred? How do these online gamers maintain their social solidarity? and what is the cause of gender inequalities and conflicts in online gaming community at the first place? This paper attempts to uncover the rationale behind the virtual community development of online gamers based on three distinct social perspectives namely social interaction, social solidarity and gender inequalities.
Keywords: Gaming, Virtual, Community, Gender Inequalities, Communication, Social Interaction, Social Solidarity

Introduction

It important to note that the emergence of online games had been contributed through the advancement of network connectivity such as Local Area Networks (LANs) and accessibility to the devices and online game platforms which resulted in mass adoption of online gaming phenomenon especially amongst the youths, of which it has been popularized ever since (Alzahrani et al., 2017). To be precise, the development of online games or digital games can be traced back since the rise of gaming consoles such as such as Sony's *PlayStation*, Nintendo's *Super Nintendo* and Sega's *Dreamcast* back in 1990s (Griffiths et al., 2003). Despite the various definitions given to the term "online digital games", perhaps it is best to entertain that it is generally defined as any forms of electronic games that requires responses and interactions from players which requires specific platforms and hardware to process that particular interactions happening in the game and computing elements (De Prato et al., 2010). Online games are mostly played across many platforms and devices such as PCs, mobile devices and gaming consoles (van Rooij, 2011). There are various instances of some of today's most popular online games such as *World of Warcraft*, *DOTA 2*, *League of Legends*, *Counter Strike Online* and *Heroes of Newerth*.

In Malaysian context, the online gaming trend and its historical developments were rather unknown and it was difficult to be traced back of which it was initially originated. However, it was majorly believed that the online gaming trend rose to popularity in Malaysia along with the rise of Internet in the early 2000s (Aziz et al., 2018). Survey conducted by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (2020), there are approximately 88% of Malaysian population who has access to Internet as well as it also suggests that about 42.8% of the online activities of Malaysian Internet users is dedicated to gaming purposes.

In general, gaming activities had received majorly negative reviews, criticisms and backlashes from the general society whereby negative perceptions and stereotyping has clouded the gaming behavior as a form of social deviance from conforming to a functioning society (Griffiths et al., 2003). Apart from that, Jonasson and Thiborg (2020) also stated that in our society also used to assume that online gaming activity back then as 'damaging activities that actually waste time'. However, despite of all of these negative connotations regarding gaming activity, the gaming community especially those who engage in online virtual realm managed to thrive up to this day as more youths are adopting this interest (Hamzan, 2020). Online gaming communities today are more diverse and rather 'solid' as all of those previous stereotyping and negative perceptions upon the gaming community by the society had somehow rendered these groups to form solidarity of their shared interest by forming their own distinct communities, subcultures, groups, identities, guilds and fashions (Washington, 2013; Ducheneaut et al., 2007; Griffiths et al., 2003). It is known that the reason as of why our society had been served with all of these negative perceptions on gaming as resulted from the lack of adequate understanding in terms of macro sociological social perspectives namely social interactions, social solidarity and conflict of gender inequalities between the male and female gamers which is quite obvious in the discourse of today's online gaming phenomenon.

Literature Review

The Social Interaction of Online Gaming and Development of Virtual Community

The process of social interaction is the most crucial element when it comes to understanding the discourse of online gaming phenomenon and its potential in developing distinct virtual community (Lewinski, 2000). Social interaction within the online gaming environment happens when two or more individuals communicate and influencing each other's actions whilst some may also posit that social interaction in online games takes place to the extent of that players are interacting through sharing of in-game resources, instructing and coordinating players on new in-game challenges, developing strategies and executing combined actions. These forms of interaction were considerably intricate and complex where it can be classified into two different parts that are social interaction as well as human-computer interaction (HCI) (Lee, 2009; Lee & Tsai, 2010). Moreover, Sheppard and Rouff (1994) connoted that HCI was determined by the notion where the end user and the applications (systems, applications and games) come into contact which enables the communicators to communicate with one another. To link this notion with today's process of interactions happening in online games settings, perhaps the one form of HCI system that are widely used in most of online games today are the Voice-over Internet Protocol (VoIP) itself, or sometimes being known as "voice chat" in order to carry out digitalized voice messages across the screens (Williams et al., 2007).

As this situation of interaction process happens through VoIP, the online game platforms can be assumed as a socializing platform and a social place which players get the opportunity to widen their virtual contacts with another players (Voiskounsky et al., 2004). In addition to this, those players who are communicating and interacting online will also be indulged in the immersive gameplay experience leading to the instances whereby online gamers eventually developing their own virtual identities as they make their way into a more interpersonal form of online relationship (Liu & Chang, 2016). In this stage of interpersonal relationship with other players within online gaming environment, the impacts exerted from the interactive features such as VoIP and text chat that are embedded within the game itself makes it possible for the interaction to shift from interpersonal level to a group communication which gives the opportunity for the online gamers to take their relationships into another level via the formation of distinct groupings such as online gaming guilds, clans, rosters and squads (Williams et al., 2007). These formation of virtual social groups are what have been mostly dubbed as the virtual community or virtual teams as perceived by the online gamers.

The Social Solidarity of Online Gaming and Virtual Community Formation

The social solidarity within online gaming community takes place as more and more online gamers are teaming up together during their extensive play and this notion is also contributed by the fact that the gaming activity itself provides many of these online gamers with all sorts of emotional attachments, enjoyable feelings, gratifications and other benefits that can be closely affiliated with process of interaction such as mutualism as well as teamwork with one another amongst the gamers (Lee, 2009; Lee & Tsai, 2010; Alzahrani et al., 2017).

As the online gamers are engaging in online gaming environment, most gamers will get caught up in the immersive gameplay where they will spend their free time, having fun, and pursuing objectives for game achievements (e.g:- ranking, victory and in-game resources) (Bong et. al., 2019; Yee, 2006). These online gamers will later on be subjected to confer to the situation

whereby emotional attachments and perceived enjoyments starts to take into action, with these notion being regarded as the "hedonic motivation" (Alzahrani et. al., 2017; Ching et. al., 2019; Hamzan, 2020). These hedonic motivations and shared emotional attachments amongst the online gamers are what was being assumed as "common conscience" whereby gamers do attain their collective, shared interests or shared values as being articulated by Pope & Johnson in 1983. These notion is supported by several other scholars who also stated that online gaming activity may potentially offer collective social interaction as the gamers are socializing themselves within games, which eventually leads to the instances where gamers escalating into interpersonal social relationship where immersion effect during the gameplay would rather enhance players interaction and socialization experience hence, becoming huge factor in shaping online players' emotions and enjoyment (Bong et. al., 2019; Huang & Hsieh, 2011). On the other hand, Jang and Byon (2019) stated that perceived enjoyment or 'hedonic motivation' as mentioned prior as rather the most apparent and viable shared common interest by the gamers as it was noted that the essence of hedonic or pleasurable motivation is based on individual's pyschological basis of finding pleasure whilst avoiding pain (Higgins, 2006).

In another end of the extreme, another common conscience that is oftentimes being affiliated with online gaming community may also exist in the form of 'achievement component' as the online gamers may find themselves situated in an immersive gameplay where they need to advance within games in order to become more powerful player as well as to advance to new levels or unlocking certain rankings which requires the players to gain power, amassing in-game resources and in-game status to do so (Bong et al., 2019; Yee, 2007). When the gamers do race for these goals of advancing themselves in game, it inadvertently creates a sense of competitiveness amongst the competing gamers (Castillo, 2019; Ching et. al., 2019; Yee, 2007). As the gamers compete with their rivalries, it is important to note that this situation requires the players' teamwork to be consolidated as a team or group to execute task-oriented goals in which the communication and interactions are mainly involved (Peña & Hancock, 2006; Williams et. al., 2007; Yee, 2007).

The final form of solidarity as being practiced by most part of online gaming community these days can also be seen from the aspect of social influence and shared identity as the online gamers are engaging in the online gameplay with other players. In this situation, the gamers who are engaging in the immersive and interactive gameplay over period of time will find themselves to be emotionally attached, enjoyable and socialized around other online players which leads them to confer to a sense of belonging to a certain online gaming grouping. As the relationship and interaction intensifies, the online gamers will later on develop trust with another during their collaborative gameplay thus, finding themselves in dire need of assuming alternative or distinct virtual identities in order to stay designated with the rest of the gaming community circle (Ching et. al., 2019; Fuster et. al., 2016; Pena & Hancock, 2006; Zhong & Yao, 2013). These distinct identities in-game as being embraced by most online gamers are considered as a rather shared 'common conscience' in which it is also being closely affiliated with what Durkheim's work (2014a) noted as "collective representations. The collective representations or shared gaming identities may exist in many forms such as logo, symbols, fashions, in-game names, formation of game squads, gaming sub-culture or the use of particular languages and 'slangs' (Harrison et al., 2017; Washington, 2013; Yusoff & Basri, 2021).

The Gender Inequalities of Online Gaming and Virtual Community Formation

The gender inequalities issue which is perceived as a form of social conflict between male and female gamers within online gaming environment is still apparent today and this situation leads to notion of which the gaming communities today are mostly dominated by the males compared to females. Harrison et. al (2017) noted that the online gaming phenomenon today is rather being known as "the masculine culture" indicating that it is now mostly being male-oriented cultural activity and women are inadvertently being often stereotyped, sexualized and objectified to serve male fanatasies and also being perceived as imposters by gaming community. In this situation, the online gaming is just as similar as modern days' working environment whereby issues of gender inequalities were still rampant as resulted from hypermasculine stereotype, in particular, the game developers today are mostly creating game products mainly to cater those marketplace of male consumers (Dill & Thill, 2007; Harrison et. al., 2017; Jenson & De Castell, 2010).

On the other end of spectrum, it is also crucial for one to be aware that despite the notion that online gaming activities are now growing extensively more than ever due to the IT development and advancement of Internet services, some parts of the online gaming community today are still cooped in the extreme belief that games shall only be dominated by the males thus, leading to the point of resisting towards the diversification of gaming culture (Todd, 2015). In addition to this, Yusoff and Basri (2021) also connoted that the gender inequalities issue within online is also apparent in the eSport industries today whereby most eSports tournaments these days are mostly won by men and partciation of women in eSports was quite low perhaps due to the violence element which is mostly present in most digital online games. The gender stereotyping and inequalities in eSport industries is in parallel with the stereotyping as in the traditional sporting activities back then where women were deemed as weak, thus preferring men participations overall due to their competency and strength in sport. Women in online gaming or eSport environment are being stigmatized and stereotyped by most male gamers as rather not skillful enough to play games as most of the existing online games today are requiring players to be involved in aggressive and violent gameplay such as killing, shooting and slashing in order to complete the primary goals of the game itself (Hamari & Sjoblom, 2017; Kim, 2017).

In the hindsight of online gaming phenomenon, another form of gender inequalities also exist in the form of sexualization and underrepresentation of women in the game itself. Female characters in many games are being portrayed as trivial, passive and more dependent on men whilst male game characters are mostly portrayed as strong, capable for leadership and mostly "overpowered". Apart from this, the nature of the online games existing today is also considered as the contributing factor as of why gender inequalities are still rampant within online gaming community. Some games are being developed by the game developers to serve the male marketplace thus, leading to the situation whereby most games today are being unintentionally "gendered" in accordance to male orientation (Ivory et. al., 2014; Kaye & Pennington, 2016; Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995).

Methodology

This study was carried out through the utilization of qualitative approach as the researcher attempts to explore the phenomenological approach of understanding a particular social phenomenon or event by describing and interpreting participants' lived experiences. This stipulated type of methodology in carrying out this study is used in order to answer and fulfill the purpose of the study, namely:

1.   How does the social interaction in the online gaming activities occurred?
2.   How do these online gamers maintain their social solidarity?
3.   What is the cause of gender inequalities and conflicts in online gaming community?

Data Instrument

In this study, the researcher used focus group approach to obtain all the relevant and significant information on the collective views from the informants. These focus groups focus on understanding informants' experiences and beliefs pertaining the online gaming phenomenon and how it develops the virtual community in our society. Morgan & Krueger (1998) suggested these criteria in conducting this type of focus groups

- To be deemed as standalone method, for research that is associated to group norms, meanings and processes.
- To collect group language and narratives or to explore a particular topic in a multi-method design.
- To clarify, extend, qualify or challenge data collected through other methods.
- Relaying feedback pertaining the results to the research participants.

In addition, Morgan & Kruger (1998) also stipulated that focus groups should be avoided according to the several criteria:

- If listening to participants' views generates expectations for the outcome of the research that cannot be fulfilled.
- If participants are uncomfortable with each other, or if they are not willing to discuss their feelings and opinions in open manner.
- If the participants cannot or refused to discuss pertaining the topic of interest of the researcher.

In general, the focus group discussion is known as the one of the most popular and widely used qualitative method in many social science studies. During the data collection process, the researcher selected a group of people with a specific criterion, in this case, those who have experienced or having engaged in online gaming activities especially amongst the youths in local settings to hold the discussion session. To fulfill the purpose of the study, the focus group was administered with a semi-structured interview and the selected research participants were asked pertaining their preliminary ideas, attitudes, feelings and perception pertaining the online gaming phenomenon itself and how do they perceive it impact in developing virtual community in Malaysia.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis in this study was utilized by the researcher by referring to Braun and Clarke's six stage framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Overall, the information gained form the interview session was recorded and transcribed to familiarize the data. Later, the researcher coded these data to represent categories of information in regards of the study purpose. After

that, the coded data were soon assigned with underlying themes in which the themes were to be reviewed in order to ensure that it was aligned to the pattern within each proposed theme. Finally, the researchers defined the apparent themes and sub-theme before eventually preparing documented report that includes extracts from the transcripts to illustrate the themes.

Results
Three overarching themes were identified, namely as: social interaction, social solidarity and gender inequalities which were the proposed social aspects of online gaming phenomenon itself and how it impacts the virtual community development in the prospect. These themes, sub-themes and theme descriptions are relayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Thematic Analysis Coding

Theme	Sub-theme	Theme Description
Social Interaction	Means of communication	Types of communication method used by online gamers
	Interactivity	The extent where online gamers utilize in-game interface to interact with others.
	Interpersonal relationship	The notion of online gamers starting to develop closer and intimate for of relationship with other gamers online
Social Solidarity	Shared interests	The notion where online gamers have one common shared conscience as a whole
	Emotional attachments	The shared emotional feelings amongst gamers such as enjoyment, anger and disappointment when conducting gameplay
	Virtual identities	The notion of where online gamers start to assume role, identities and resemblance to develop sense of belonging
Gender Inequalities	Masculine gaming culture	The situation where male dominates the gaming phenomenon compared to females
	Stereotyping and Stigmatization	The typical upheld assumptions about women in gaming
	Sexualization and underrepresentation	The objectification of women and trivial roles assigned to women in gaming industry

Social Interaction
As the researcher dwells into the analysis of data, it can be deduced that the results obtained from the interview session carried out with research participants to demonstrate that social interaction plays major role in contributing towards the development of virtual community

amongst the online gamers. Social interaction encompasses everything that can potentially connect one player with another such as the means of communications, the interactivity of the gaming platforms utilized by the gamers to carry out communication processes and the anticipated level of interpersonal relationship formed over the period of time as the gamers engaged in collaborative gameplay.

1) Means of communications: The methods utilized by the online gamers to communicate with one another within games such as via (Voice-over Internet Protocol VoIP), text messages, substituting non-verbal cues with usages of emojis and icons or even some slangs and abbreviations.

"I often tells my squads in games such as MOBA to rather focus on securing objectives as the main goal and not to get to caught up in number of kills…kills don't really matter if you still lose anyway."

2) Interactivity: The level of sophistication in messaging and communication features possessed by many of the online games today such as the flexibility of players to communicate either within gameplays, in-game livestreaming features as well as supports and advocacy services provided by game developers to enhance competitive gameplays and players participation.

"Games like Mobile Legends today are becoming more interesting day by day…I mean, you can watch in-game livestreams of top players according to the heroes selected while also be able to communicate with the players in real-time? that's way better than watching livestreams on platforms such as Twitch and stuff."

3) Interpersonal relationship: The situation where online gamers develop intimacy with other players online as they play and engaged in the communication process to carry out task-specific goals such as teamwork to achieve victory and gaining in-game resources.

"I know a guy in PUBG, that guy was so dang good with snipers and assaults. He always 'carried' us in game campaign and guess what…most of the time it's "Chicken Dinner" with that dude around. We always play together when we wanted to push our ranks."

Social Solidarity

Social solidarity is yet another crucial theme as solidarity of the online gamers as being derived from the interview session were the elements which brings the online gamers together to exist as a much more cohesive and united social group in order to affiliate themselves with their own shared interests. Social solidarity in this case, was composed of these three different sub-themes which are shared interests of the online gamers, emotional attachments and assuming virtual identities as the gamers brought themselves into the virtual world.

1) Shared interests: The online gamers do have things in common and those were dubbed as shared interests or 'common conscience' whereby online gamers are mostly having the almost similar shared values, identities and goals during their online gaming activity. These shared interests could be anything ranging from levelling up in-game characters, gathering in-game resources, to achieve victories, completing tasks and to show their enthusiasms as a whole on particular games.

"When we play, be it in any games, we just have one thing in minds and that is to win it and crush the opponents off…"

2) Emotional attachments: As the gamers engaged with each other in their online collaborative playthrough, they may share the similar emotions with one another for example, they will feel angry and disappointed if their team is losing or they may feel happy and satisfaction if their team make all the way to victory.

"We are so pissed off anytime we see if there is one guy in our team who becomes the 'feeder' (dying so many times in games which would benefit the opponents and brings down the morale of the team). We would want someone who makes it a serious gameplay and not having the mindset of 'it's just a game'…"

3) Virtual identities: A distinct or alternative appearances and self-actualization as well as adopted roles whenever the online gamers are situating themselves in collaborative gameplay. Every individual gamer exists as a building block of the gaming community and each of them have different identities and roles in which they assumed in virtual world. For example, a person may be known for his forte and expertize in taking up the role of 'assassin' in a MOBA game. Thus, the gaming community may assign this person with "core" role in the gaming. Apart from from that, this person himself may be assigning himself with a distinct and unique in-game names or nicknames so he can designate himself from the rest of the gamers. In addition to this, some gamers may also represent themselves as a gaming team or groupings which are mostly existing in nowadays eSports arena hence, giving birth to emergence of many online games clans, guilds, fandoms, sub-cultures and communities with their own beliefs, values and shared interests.

"I don't know why but people love to call a 'camper' in Counter Strike. Sitting around with a sniper rifle waiting for an enemy to come and take that chance to make a shot, I guess that's my best forte though. That's why my IGN (in-game name) is 'Dead-Shot98'…"
"I used to be joining in the NOOB squad in Mobile Legends…but now that squad is no longer well-known since there are tonnes of even stronger and popular squads these days to compete with such RRQ, Blacklist, MYA, Bosskurr Gaming and 7GL. It's getting harder to rank up now with these highly skilled players around these days."

Gender Inequalities
Gender inequalities is another recorded theme during the study as no matter how advanced the gaming industry could be, there would still be a social issue which is still a concern in today's online gaming community. This gender inequalities problem led to the imbalance between male and female participation in online gaming activity be it at casual level or highly competitive arena such as e-Sports. Today's gaming phenomenon is mostly dominated by male players and there are little participations from females. This gender inequalities theme also have been identified to encompass the matters from stereotyping, to sexualization as well as underrepresentation of women.

1) Masculine gaming culture: To take a glance at the current situation, most of the online gaming industries were dominated by the men compared to women which is the main reason why online gaming phenomenon has been dubbed as rather a modern days' 'masculine culture'. As a matter of fact, most games are also being developed to satisfy male preferences rather women. Most games are developed to include violent gameplays and gory battles which further suits male preferences, thus, giving an outlook to abundance of games today which has been unintentionally 'gendered'.

"In my opinion, I guess there's just too many boys crawling around in many online games today. I think there are lesser girls, in fact, which is why most of us boys are 'simping' for those gamer girls. I mean, to find girls who truly had passion in gaming? Now that's truly rare."

2) Stereotyping and Stigmatization: The women and females involvement in online gaming phenomenon had always been stereotyped and stigmatized by many. In this sense, women are oftentimes undermined and diminished by the men in games.

"I pretty much despise it when teaming up with girls when playing MOBA games especially since they only know how to take up roles of mages and supports…This is really hurting the balance of the team during matchmaking. Don't these girls really know how to be even more proactive and take up roles like fighters or assassins instead of mages?"

3) Sexualization and underrepresentation: Women has been mostly sexualized and underrepresented in today's online gaming phenomenon. In the gaming industries itself, female characters in-games has also been portrayed in rather alluring manner and shown as the weak gender in most games. Apart from that, females in games are also believed to be less competent compared to men in situating a collaborative play.

"I remember the time when I was playing Mobile Legends with my pals, he suddenly said that one of the female in-game characters has quite a 'thicc' thighs and he somehow been 'simping' (admiring and seduced) for it…"

"I guess, that's just how it is, though. Girls will always be girls and boys will always be boys. You can't expect girls to do boy's things in games such as killing or carrying the game to victory."

Discussion

As the researcher conducted this study in observing the impacts of online gaming phenomenon towards the development of today's virtual community based on the identified themes, these themes has been highlighted as the most prominent social aspects in building the existing online gaming community these days. The first theme pertaining the social interaction gives out better understanding on how does communication and interaction processes in online games can be so fruitful and efficient that it leads up to relationship and intimacy retention amongst different individuals. This finding supports the previous study conducted by Williams et al (2007) who stated that how in-game communication features are crucial and important in shaping the communication flows between online gamers.

The finding on the second theme of social solidarity as being outlined throughout the research provides an insight towards understanding how do these gamers really unify themselves and in what manner to they find their solidarity to exist together within a distinct virtual community with their own sets of customs, beliefs, identities and even sub-culture. Furthermore, it is also astounding to find that most of the online gamers do shared the similar emotional attachments as well as enthusiasms and common conscience in gaming to carry out task-oriented goals.

The final finding that can be derived from this study is pertaining the gender inequalities as a social issue which is still rampant and rather unresolved in today's online gaming phenomenon. This study points out that there are several reasons for women's stigmatization and underrepresentation in gaming as well as outlining the insight that most of the games produced by the gaming industries today are rather lacking in advocacy for female

participation as a whole hence, pointing out to the situation of today's gaming culture to be mostly dominated by males.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides a preliminary and exploratory insights on today's gaming culture and how the social aspects listed as the overarching themes were significantly impactful towards the development of virtual community amongst online gamers today. There are three main findings and the first one focus on social interaction that gives out better understanding on how communication and interaction processes in online games led to relationship and intimacy retention amongst different individuals. Second, social solidarity among gamers exists within a distinct virtual community with their own sets of customs, beliefs, identities and even sub-culture. Finally, gender inequalities found to be a social issue which is still rampant and rather unresolved in today's online gaming phenomenon. It is recommended that this study can be replicated in future for better understanding in the causal-effect relationship of the variables. Therefore, the exploration of the ways online gaming phenomenon affects the development of virtual community at regional level will be wider and generalize to the targeted population of online gamers.

References

Alzahrani, A. I., Mahmud, I., Ramayah, T., Alfarraj, O., & Alalwan, N. (2017). Extending the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to explain online game playing among Malaysian undergraduate students. Telematics and Informatics, 34(4), 239-251.

Aziz, N., Iida, H., Ariffin, M., Akhir, E. A. P., & Sugathan, S. K. (2018). Massively MultiplayerOnline Game (MMOG) impact towards Malaysian youth's time management, social life and psychology. Advanced Science Letters, 24(3), 1754-1757.

Bong, W. J., Teh, E. Y. W., & Yon, D. Y. (2019). Motivations of online gaming and identification of avatar predict internet gaming disorder's symptoms among youth in Malaysia (Doctoral dissertation, UTAR).

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative research in psychology, 3(2), 77-101.

Castillo, R. P. (2019). Exploring the differential effects of social and individualistic gameplay motivations on bridging social capital for users of a massively multiplayer online game. Computers in Human Behavior, 91(September 2018), 263–270. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.10.016

Ching, Y. T., Bek, D., Lee, W. R., Loh, H. Z., & Tiong, I. T. (2019). The motivational factors that affect online gaming community to participate esports in Malaysia (Doctoral dissertation, UTAR).

De Prato, G., Feijóo, C., Nepelski, D., Bogdanowicz, M., & Simon, J. P. (2010). Born digital/grown digital: Assessing the future competitiveness of the EU video games software industry. JRC Scienfific and Technical Reports, EUR 24555 EN.

Dill, K. E., & Thill, K. P. (2007). Video game characters and the socialization of gender roles: Young people's perceptions mirror sexist media depictions. Sex Roles, 57(1112), 851864.

Ducheneaut, N., Yee, N., Nickell, E., & Moore, R. J. (2007, April). The life and death of online gaming communities: a look at guilds in world of warcraft. In Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems (pp. 839-848).

Durkheim, E. (2014a). The division of labor in society. Simon and Schuster.

Fuster, H., Carbonell, X., Pontes, H. M., & Griffiths, M. D. (2016). Spanish validation of the internet gaming disorder-20 (IGD-20) test. Computers in Human Behavior, 56, 215-224. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2015.11.050

Griffiths, M. D., Davies, M. N., & Chappell, D. (2003). Breaking the stereotype: The case of online gaming. CyberPsychology & behavior, 6(1), 81-91

Hamari, J., & Sjoblom, M. (2017). What is eSports and why do people watch it?. Internet research.

Hamzan, M. H. B. (2020). Factors Influencing The Intention To Play Esports Games Among Students In Puncak Alam.

Harrison, R. L., & Drenten, J. (2017). GAMER GIRLS: NAVIGATING A SUBCULTURE OF GENDER.

Higgins, T. (2006). Value From Hedonic Experience and Engagement [Ebook].

Huang, L. Y., & Hsieh, Y. J. (2011). Predicting online game loyalty based on need gratification and experiential motives. Internet Research, 21(5), 581-598.

Introduction to Sociology: Sociological Perspectives (n.d.). Lumen Learning. https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wmopen-introtosociology/chapter/sociological-perspectives/

Ivory, A. H., Fox, J., Waddell, F., & Ivory, J. D. (2014). Sex role stereotyping is hard to kill: A field experiment measuring social responses to user characteristics and behaviour in an online multiplayer first-person shooter game. Computers in Human Behavior, 35, 148-156. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2014.02.026

Jang, W., & Byon, K. (2019). Antecedents and consequence associated with esports gameplay. International Journal Of Sports Marketing And Sponsorship, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print).

Jenson, J., & de Castell, S. (2010). Gender, simulation, and gaming: Research review and redirections. Simulation & Gaming, 41(1), 5171.

Jonasson, K., & Thiborg, J. (2010). Electronic sport and its impact on future sport. Sport in Society

Kaye, L. K., & Pennington, C. R. (2016). "Girls can't play": The effects of stereotype threat on females' gaming performance. Computers in Human Behavior, 59, 202-209.

Kim, S. J. (2017). Gender inequality in eSports participation: examining League of Legends (Doctoral dissertation).

Lee, M. C. (2009). Understanding the behavioural intention to play online games: An extension of the theory of planned behaviour. Online Information Review, 33(5): 849-872.

Lee, M. C., & Tsai, T. R. (2010). What drives people to continue to play online games? An extension of technology model and theory of planned behavior. Intl. Journal of Human–Computer Interaction, 26(6): 601-620.

Lewinski, J. S. (2000), Developer's Guide to Computer Game Design, Wordware, Portland, OR.

Malaysian Communications and multimedia commission (2020), Internet Users Survey 2020, Publisher: Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission.

Liu, C. C., & Chang, I. C. (2016). Model of online game addiction: The role of computermediated communication motives. Telematics and Informatics,33(4), 904-915.

Morgan, D. L., & Krueger, R. A. (1998). The focus group guidebook. Sage.

Pena, J., & Hancock, J. T. (2006). An analysis of socioemotional and task communication in online multiplayer video games. Communication research, 33(1), 92-109.

Pope, W., & Johnson, B. D. (1983). Inside organic solidarity. American Sociological Review, 681- 692.

Sheppard, S., and Rouff, C. (1994), Encyclopedia of Software Engineering, Vol. 2, Wiley, New York, NY

Thompson, T. L., & Zerbinos, E. (1995). Gender roles in animated cartoons: Has the picture changed in 20 years? Sex Roles, 32, 651-673.

Todd, C. (2015). Commentary: GamerGate and resistance to the diversification of gaming culture. Women's Studies Journal, 29(1), 64.

Van Rooij, A. (2011). Online video game addiction: Exploring a new phenomenon.

Voiskounsky, A. E., Mitina, O. V., & Avetisova, A. A. (2004). Playing Online Games: Flow Experience. PsychNology journal, 2(3), 259-281.

Washington, K. (2013). The Gamer Subculture in Lacy, WA. Anthós, 5(1), 7.

Williams, D., Caplan, S., & Xiong, L. (2007). Can you hear me now? The impact of voice in an online gaming community. Human communication research, 33(4), 427-449.

Yee, N. (2006). The demographics, motivations, and derived experiences of users of massively multi-user online graphical environments. Presence: Teleoperators and Virtual Environments, 15(3), 309-329. doi:10.1162/pres.15.3.309

Yee, N. (2007). Motivations of Play in Online Games. Journal of CyberPsychology and Behavior, 9(6), 772-775. Retrieved from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/2d8d/3e2a295dea29a7f900033848039dcb55dbf7.pdf

Yusoff, N. H., & Basri, S. (2021). THE ROLE OF SOCIALIZATION TOWARDS PARTICIPATION OF MALAYSIA FEMALE PLAYERS IN E-SPORT. International Journal of Social Science Research, 3(1), 132-145.

Zhong, Z. J., & Yao, M. Z. (2013). Gaming motivations, avatar self-identification and symptoms of online game addiction. Asian Journal of Communication, 23(5), 555-573. doi:10.1080/01292986.2012.748814