



Analysis on e-sport as a new sport category

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Abstract

Digital technology has developed fast and it gives a lot of benefit for people in many aspect including sports. There is an increasing number of e-sport communities in Sukoharjo consisting of teenagers from the age range of 15-18 where these ages are considered productive age with high risk of technology, internet, and game online use problems. Addiction to online game is one of the cases which causes the decline of public interest towards e-sport and it impacts on the low development of e-sport. This study shows that the desire to play e-sport basically comes from within oneself or from friends' encouragement. During productive age, e-sport is merely a hobby or temporary entertainment. Facilities is a dominant factor to support talent in participating in e-sport competition. Parent's role also becomes a facility which needs to be considered because parent's perception affects gamers' skill and ability. Negative perception from public towards game can be an opportunity to show that games can turn into a productive hobby. To enhance one's ability in e-sport, participation in competition and community is needed so that gamers can improve their skills and expand their social networks.

Keywords: e-sport, new sport, sport

Introduction

1. Problem Statement

In this digital era, technology-based sport or what is often referred as E-sport has become even more popular among the public. E-sport is also a competitive and organised video game which generally can be defined as an activity to battle agility between individuals or groups without any limitation. This electronic sport is done by using tools which operate visually or online. Digital sport is also organised specifically just like any other professional sports in general (Kurniawan, 2019) ^[5]. E-sport gives positive impact to Indonesia's economy. In 2018, e-sport made a profit of \$905.6 million or equivalent to Rp13.2 trillion in the world market, placing Indonesia as the 16th biggest e-sport industry in the world (Hamari and Sjoblom, 2017) ^[2]. In the development of it, e-sport gives positive impact on social aspect, e-sport gives benefit to its players in the form of soft skill improvement and development through competitive competition. It is one of the positive impact that can be gained from e-sport activity (Rothwell and Shaffer, 2019) ^[8]. E-sport becomes one of the alternative efforts to reduce stress, improve health, and maintain and persevere quality of life balance.

Online game addiction which is also a part of e-sport can be a serious problem if people do not watch out and put enough attention to it during the development of e-sport activity. Based on a study, it shows that teenager is among the age group with the most problems in using technology, internet, and online game (Novrialdy, 2019) ^[6]. This can cause the decline in public interest towards e-sport and become an obstacle in the development of e-sport itself (Hidayatullah, 2021) ^[4]. Basic knowledge about e-sport and the limit that people need to know especially teenagers as the age group with the most players in this game are needed. Therefore, e-sport can develop into a prestigious sport which is appropriate for teenagers to participate, it can also become a sport that can bring positive impact for these teenagers, and it can change the bad perception people have about e-sport.

2. Theoretical Framework

E-sport is a category in sport which utilizes electronic tools in operating its activity. Electronic tools which are used generally in e-sport include: computer, laptop, and gadget. Besides, e-sport in general uses video game as a main media in its operation because in e-sport, the game inside the video game is the one which will be competed. Anwari (2018) ^[1] states that e-sport can be categorized into a physical exercise which involves certain body parts, in this case, eyes. In addition, sport can help in controlling gross motor skills. All these times, E-sport athletes play approximately 8-9 hours a day to become the best player, the other sports also have the same

routine even though it might be done differently. Professional athletes need a lot of concentration, dedication, practice, preparation, mental, and stamina. One of universities in Cologne did a study on E-sport athletes in 2016. That study reveals that E-sport athletes had high skill and can overcome crisis during competition. Professor Ingo Frobose as the chief of the research has found out that E-sport athlete does up to 400 movements on keyboard and mouse every minute. That movement can be done up to four times of the average number done by the players. Both hands move simultaneously and the brain also works at the same time during the game. The result of this study finds out that E-sport athlete does the same activity as physical sport like soccer, the only difference is that it is not physically done like traditional sport (Dailymail, 2017).

Many people think that E-sport is a sport but there are also many who think that E-sport is merely playing a game. Therefore, reviewing the sociology of sport (Guttman, 1978) and the philosophy of sport (Suits, 2007) in Jenny S.E., *et al* (2016:5) which state that the characteristics of sport include:

a. Play

Guttman (1978) in Jenny S.E., *et al* (2016:5) points out that playing is the starting foundation of sport. E-sport has the playing aspect in it so it can be categorized as a sport.

b. Organized

Suits (2007) and Guttman (1978) in Jenny S. E., *et al* (2016:6) state that a sport is organized and has rules. An E-sport competition has rules that have to be obeyed and held up by player.

c. Competition

Guttman (1978) in Jenny S. E., *et al* (2016: 6) believes that sport has to involve competition so that it can produce winner and loser. E-sport competition nowadays develops fast to the point that competition between countries is possible to be done.

d. Skill

According to Suits (2007) in Jenny S. E., *et al* (2016:7), sport has to involve skillful game where opportunity and luck are not the only reasons to win. Playing E-sport requires skill whether it is a skill to control a controller or intelligence skill in making decision in the video game.

E-sport is a unique activity where harmonious and ideal relationship between thinking process, emotion, and hand agility movement is always needed. Furthermore, with the development of technology that is happening these days, sport does not want to be left behind by the development of technology. Therefore, with the presence of this study, the researcher can understand what is happening in the society right now and how far the electronic sport phenomenon exists in the society.

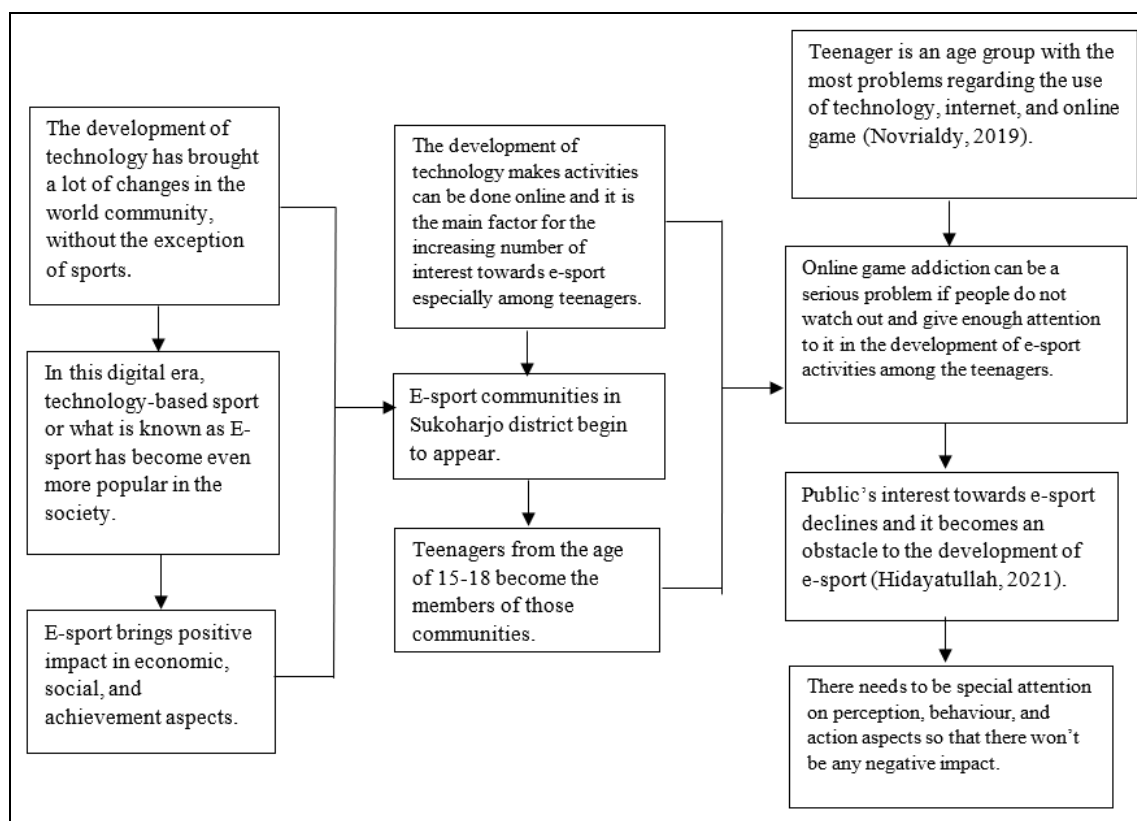


Fig 1: Framework

Method

This research was done with qualitative descriptive approach. This approach was chosen by the researcher in order to create narration regarding situations or events. The researchers chose qualitative descriptive research method because the aim of this research was to find out the interest, perception, behavior, and actions of teenagers towards E-sport in Sukoharjo district. Therefore, the researchers needed the data to be obtained from an extensive process which began with observation and interview, as well as data in the form of sentences that directly came from the source.

1. Source of the Data

The source of the data in this research was teenagers from the age 15-18. The subject of this research was chosen using purposive sampling approach.

2. Technique of Collecting the Data

The steps done by the researcher to obtain the data include:

- a. Observation which started from the beginning of the research by observing all of the online and offline activities done by the community in Sukoharjo district.
- b. The researcher directly interviewed all of the parties involved in order to obtain relevant data through online or face to face communication.
- c. Documentation could be used as an evidence that the researchers have done the research without falsifying anything in order to make sure that all of the data were valid and consistent with the reality.

3. Technique of Analyzing Data

This research used three steps data analysis, including:

- a. Data reduction which aims to reduce the amount of data, to filter out the data, to code or group the data, to make memo, and many more.
- b. Data presentation to combine the data obtained from the research.
- c. Conclusion making and verification are the summary that covers all of the data being presented.

Comparative technique was used in order to obtain harmony that would eventually be used to compare the data obtained from the field with the library research (theory). It was used as the foundation to examine the phenomenon, whether there was similarity or difference between the two for a conclusion to be made afterwards.

4. Data Validity Test

Testing the validity of the result was done using data triangulation with Norman K. Denkin perspective. The triangulation itself is a combination of several methods used to test the phenomenon utilizing different paradigms and perspectives. Triangulation is done with several different triangulation methods, it can be done with observation, survey, or interview method. In this research, the researchers also used interview with different informants to strengthen the data obtained from the interviews with several previous informants (Rahardjo, 2020) ^[7].

Results

The results of the research obtained from four informants showed that:

- a. Informant 1: The desire behind becoming a gamer came from friend's persuasion and with the development of technology where everything needs to be done online and it can help in earning additional income by sparing time for it. At the age of 15, playing game becomes an activity to fill some spare time after school. Becoming a pro-player that trains with a team leader who is followed and participates in various online game competitions from each other's house or alongside each other in the same room.
- b. Informant 2: The desire to play game came from within oneself or so that it could become a productive hobby. At the productive age of 15-18, playing game merely becomes a hobby. In order to be a skilled gamer with achievement, tools become a facility which needs to be considered. Joining community is also important along with trainings to build chemistry in order to achieve the community's goal. Skill can be measured by participating in competitions.
- c. Informant 3: The desire to play game came from within oneself or so that it could become a potential hobby to earn money for a long term. At the productive age of 15-18, playing game becomes a hobby to refresh oneself from fatigue. Tools and facilities become a dominant factor to improve skill and achievement in online game. Participating in community also becomes an important aspect along with trainings to build

chemistry in order to achieve the community's goal. Skill measurement can be done by participating in several competitions.

- d. Informant 4: Playing game was an activity which has been done from a very young age because age cannot be used as an indicator to become a pro-player. Having friend to practice courage in talking to new people is the positive impact from online game, while the negative impact is the inability to manage time in playing online game to study or work because hard work, minimum eight hours of practice, and joining local community which understands about online game are required in order to become a pro-player and to reach the goal.

Discussion

In this research, all of online gamers have different starts and backgrounds in playing online game. Interest and motivation to play online game also come from within oneself and by friend's persuasion. The researchers see that motivation in playing online game which comes from each online game addict's self can be reviewed from the Needs for Achievement aspect where the need that online game addicts have is to reach Ranking Level or higher ranking in order to gain satisfaction and pride for their own selves. Online game player reveals that there is Ranking Level in playing online game or what is often referred as ranking becomes the measurement in playing online game.

In symbolic interaction between individuals, there is an important attention in complex transaction process where face is not shown or competition without face involves behavioral aspects of each player. Players mostly stay silent and concentrate towards game strategy rather than interacting with the other players. Usually, coordination between players only happens using symbols or templates which are provided in online games. It causes players to have transaction mission in a game in order to win a team competition. The researcher interprets that overall, an online gamer has a role to fulfill by playing for a rather long duration in a day. Compared to social media access, in this case, people think that the easy communication form is not through face-to-face communication but through game application or social media which is then interpreted using Computer Mediated Communication theory.

Looking at it from the second concept of Computer Mediated Communication, which is mediation, in which mediation is a simple process or the definition of a message delivery.

Based on the research which has been done, it shows that teenagers are enthusiastic towards E-sport and many of them turn E-sport into an achievement sport. There are a lot of debates on whether E-sport can be considered as sport or not but not so little think that E-sport is just a game play. Playing is the early foundation of sport. E-sport has the playing aspect in it so it can be considered as a sport (Guttman & Jenny, 2016). Sport needs to involve competition so that it can produce winner and loser (Guttman, 2016). E-sport competition has developed fast to the point that competition between countries exists. One of the characteristics of sport is skill where that skill needs to be physical. E-sport primarily uses thinking skill just like chess. Sitting and hitting controller button are also physical activities. Furthermore, when people think, they also release energy and it drains their stamina.

Research Limitation

This research is limited for it does not study every E-sport player in Sukoharjo district. The other limitation lies on its methodology where there is a lack of variation regarding informants so the information is not quite complete. Therefore, it is advised for the other researchers to study the other aspects.

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