RECEPTION ANALYSIS OF PORNOGRAPHY IN VIDEO GAME PLAYER

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Abstract

This study aims to understand how teenagers know their meaning of pornographic content in the game Dragon Age and The Witcher and understand how this player reproduces the message received. This research used qualitative research methods with the ethnography method. The research subjects consisted of 2 gamers who have different backgrounds on the condition of owning or frequently playing games with pornographic content. The two subjects selected according to criteria, including those who have been playing video games for a long time, are over 18 years old and have free access to video games. The position of each informant in this study shows that they are in the position of negotiated readers. Although both informants actively received pornographic messages in the game, both informants negotiated the meaning of what was received. Each informant negotiates to mean based on their respective fields of reference.

Keyword: *Pornography, Reception Analysis, Video Game Player*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana remaja mengetahui makna konten porno dalam game Dragon Age dan The Witcher dan memahami bagaimana pemain ini mereproduksi pesan yang diterima. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan metode etnografi. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari dua gamer yang memiliki latar belakang berbeda, dengan syarat gamer tersebut memiliki atau sering bermain game dengan konten porno. Dua subjek yang dipilih berdasarkan kriteria, termasuk mereka yang telah lama bermain video game, berusia di atas 18 tahun, dan memiliki akses gratis ke video game. Posisi setiap informan dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa mereka berada dalam posisi pembaca yang dinegosiasikan. Meskipun kedua informan secara aktif menerima pesan porno dalam permainan, kedua informan menegosiasikan makna dari apa yang diterima. Setiap informan menegosiasikan makna berdasarkan bidang referensi masing-masing.

Kata kunci: Pornografi, Analisis Penerimaan, Pemutar Video Game

Introduction

Today's digital games don't must a sexual theme to drawing pornography. In fact, many popular games currently in circulation have pornographic content. The existence of sexual or pornographic content can be packaged in such a way that it becomes a part that adds 'value' to a game.

Game content with this theme can actually be found in Indonesia, but for it is quite difficult to know the number of copies or players accurately, considering Indonesia as a country where people still use pirated devices to play games. However, if you look broadly, in 2017, Newzoo (2017), published data on the number of digital gamers in Indonesia which reached 43.7 million with total expenditure of around USD 880 million. Assuming that the number of gamers in Indonesia in 2017, as many as 263 million people, it can be said that more than 20% of Indonesia's population is digital game players.

The amount of gamers that is free from this regulation has given rise to Indonesian people who can freely and freely access digital games but are not followed by understanding when accessing. Digital games, like other media such as movies or television shows, contained content. Content in the media is also diverse, ranging from being limited to entertainment to content that contains violence or pornography. For film or television media, the government already has several organizations that deal with the problems, such as the Film Censorship Institution (LSF) and the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI), which supervise the content contained in films or television shows. However, there aren't any organization that focused in supervising content in digital games. And the problem is that, the type of content in games are different from films. Many video games have both light and heavy pornographic content, from mere nudity to sexual scenes and sexual romance. On film, censorship can be done by cutting unwanted scenes or blur scenes, whereas in video games

are not that simple. Cutting scenes is not possible on video game content because it will damage the existing programming language and will result in the software or the games not working. Indeed, in November 2016, the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (KEMKOMINFO), established the rules of the Indonesian Game Rating System (IGRS) (Viska, 2016). This regulation is used to regulate the production, distribution and consumption of digital games based on age restrictions. One of the main objectives of this rule is to prevent children from violence or pornography and pornographic content in games. Even so, the application of this rule can be considered ineffective, especially considering the culture of playing in people who use pirated devices, where the use of pirated products is certainly unofficial and free from regulations.

Easy access, and weak regulation makes digital game players in Indonesia is easy to access games even with explicit sexual themes or contain pornography. Data related to the number of users of sexual and pornographic games certainly cannot be ascertained, but if it refers to the number of gamers in Indonesia that are so massive and their content can be embedded in several popular games, then of course there are some of the players who enjoy the game.

This case is interesting to study, given that Indonesia as a country with the most Muslim population in the world (Pew Research Centre, 2009), and values in Islamic teachings also forbid its adherents to watch scenes which are laden with sexual content or pornography as it is written in Qur'an Surat An-Nur 30-31,

> "Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do."And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons,

their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed."

Some of the many titles that have pornographic and sexuality content are the Witcher, Dragon Age and Mass Effect series. These three titles come from the RPG (Role Playing Game) genre, a genre in the game that allows players to design free characters and choose their stories more freely.

Research Questions

After parsing the introduction above, the research questions is, How social psychological conditions have effects on player while playing games which has pornographic content?

Research Method

This study used qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods use descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from people and observable behavior (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975). Based on this definition, qualitative research methods can be used to examine and understand the attitudes, views, feelings and behavior of individuals or groups of people.

In this study the author will examine how the process of media exposure which then creates the creation of meaning in video game players as the audience. The analysis can be categorized as a reception analysis. Reception analysis can be said as a new perspective in the discourse and social aspects of communication theory (Jensen, 2002). Furthermore, Baran (2003) revealed that reception analysis focuses on the process of meaning and in-depth understanding of media texts, and how individuals

interpret media content. Reception analysis then becomes a separate approach that tries to examine in depth how the actual processes through which media discourse is assimilated by various discourses and cultural practices of game players (Jensen, 2002).

It can be said that reception analysis views gamers as active subjects. Gamers are seen as cultural agents who have their own power in terms of producing meaning from the various discourses offered by the media. The meaning carried by the media can then be open or polysemic and can even be responded to in an opposition manner by the public (Fiske, 1997).

The author uses a purposive sampling technique in determining informants. According to Eriyanto (2007), the sample taken in a purposive technique is based on certain considerations from the author. As the name implies, sample selection is based on a specific reason or purpose. Thus, the writer intentionally took samples with arguments that could be scientifically justified.

The research subjects consisted of 2 gamers who have different backgrounds, the condition is that these gamers have/are/often play games with pornographic content. The two subjects selected according to criteria, including those who have been playing video games for a long time, are over 18 years old, muslim, and have free access to video games.

Discussions (contain subjects, research findings and analysis)

With the data already obtained, the researcher will examine and analyze the data by dividing it into four parts. First, the researcher will explain how the experiences of each informant when accessing pornographic games. Second, the researcher will examine various factors that influence the reception and point of view of the player or each informant based on the Frame of Reference. Third, researchers will describe how each informant understood the concepts and issues of pornography contained in the game as well as analyzing how each informant interpreted

pornography in playing games. Fourth, the researcher will clarify the meaning of each informant, make a comparison, and draw conclusions based on the results of the analysis.

Research Subject

In this section, the researcher will explain how each informant's point of view when playing pornographic games. Each informant has his own unique perspective when playing pornography games. Questions asked to each informant about the process of playing informant games and what drives them to play games with pornographic content.

Research Subject: Mamad

Mamad is currently a study surgeon in Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta. Mamad is 33 years old, has a family with one child, lives to rent, and does not have a permanent job. Mamad claimed to fulfill his daily needs he still came from his parents who were also still in Yogyakarta and a Koran teacher and a doctor. Mamad told me that he had more than 20 years of gaming experience.

Nowadays, Mamad is not too active as a gamer. Even though he always takes the time to play games for an hour on his friend's cellphone or once a week he went to game center. He revealed that there were several reasons why he was not currently active. First, he explained that his busy life as a surgeon who needed focus and high concentration. He said that in the surgical process, he must focus on maintaining accuracy and precision, which if there is a slight error can result in the loss of one's life. Secondly, this lecture also demanded him to become a doctor on duty at the Sardjito hospital, where this really drained his energy and time. Third, is the reason for his family. With his busy schedule, when he got home, Mamad wanted to pay attention to his family, which he also rarely had time for together. Another reason is the financial reason, in which he currently claims to be hit by a cost problem and cannot buy the latest

consoles or games. However, he intends that if in the near future he has money, the first thing he will do is buy a computer to play games.

The history of the Mamad game experience is quite long. Mamad himself has been playing games since he was 5-6 years old, where his father already had a computer with a DOS operating system installed with old games such as Prince of Persia (1989) and Wolfenstein 3D (1992). Because there was no television in his house then playing games on his father's computer became the main entertainment for Mamad and his three brothers. At that time, his father was quite supportive. This is done by his father always upgrade the computer at home so that the game at home is always following the latest developments. Another case, with the mother of Mamad, who does not like their children playing games. Mamad's mother is known to be fierce and strict in forbidding her children from playing games. Thus, this Mamad often received strict and harsh punishment for violating the rules of his mother. Even so, it did not dampen Mamad's intention to continue playing the game until now.

> "Yes, frankly sepaking, I was exposed to domestic violence, my mother was beating, even cutting and others." (Mamad, 2017).

Even Mamad's love for this game has been known by his friends since childhood. During middle school, he admitted that he was the one who invited his friends to skip class and play games. And at the Sardjito hospital, in his current practice, he claimed that he spread the culture of playing games among his employees and other doctors.

This is my achievement, I am proud (laugh). Who invites people to play mobile legend in the surgery department (Sardjito Hospital) (Mamad, 2017).

Mamad claimed that he applied the teachings of Islam which he believed in every activity that he did everyday, one example is that he applied a regulation prohibiting the practice of 'Riba' by prohibiting his wife from working in one of the state-owned banks, even though Mamad

does not currently have a steady income. In addition, Mamad also often uploads on his social media pages content that contains Islamic teachings he believes in, and writes, because, as far as I know, Islam teaches us to keep carrying the label of religion in every line of our life... we was created to worship ... Nothing else ... Hihi (Mamad, 2017)".

Despite this belief, Mamad admitted that he still often accessed pornographic content in various media, because he considered it to be part of his needs.

Research Subject: Leo Hutri

Leo Hutri is a content writer on the game news portal, Gamebrott. Leo is from Pekanbaru, currently residing in Yogyakarta, aged 28, not yet married, but has plans to get married this year. Although related to the field of journalism, Leo's educational background is not from the field of communication science, or journalism, but from mechanical engineering. Leo has finished his master's degree this year in mechanical engineering at Gadjah Mada University.

Leo has a long experience playing games. At school, Leo's parents are quite supportive of Leo to play games, where Leo's parents provide the SNES, Sega, and Playstation consoles in the family room. Even so, Leo's parents limit Leo in playing games, which only allows Leo to play games once a week on Saturdays and Sundays. The reason was applied by Leo's parents not because of the assumption that playing games can make him lazy but rather for the sake of his eyes health. Even with these rules, Leo claimed to often steal time to play games, where Leo claimed at that time he could play every day for 3-4 hours, after returning from school and studying.

Leo claimed that the game is part of passion. Because it is this passion which then drives Leo to choose to study in mechanical engineering. He told me that when playing games he also likes to make modifications on his personal computer (PC). Because to play on the PC

platform it takes special expertise to know the computer specifications and specifications needed by the game to run the game. Not infrequently, he needs to overclock to improve computer performance or need to replace machines or devices in the computer to be able to run games that require certain specifications, which not everyone can do this. Leo admitted that his interest in games and 'oprek' activities encouraged him to choose to study in mechanical engineering up to the master's level. Until now, Leo still wants to be close to the game world, where Leo still plays games, and works in the gaming content industry.

Leo admitted, that his family adheres to various beliefs. So then, Leo felt that religion was something that didn't need to be too deep to be understood. But with his plans to get married this year, Leo increasingly feels that he needs to pursue his understanding of Islam. He always tried to find time to uphold prayer 5 times a day, and take courses in reading the Quran. He stated,

> "Yes I am trying to carry out what is required in Islam. I prayed for five times a day, and now I learn to read the Koran again, because in my family I used to, even though I was Muslim, no one taught me. So now I take courses to learn to read the Quran. "(Leo, 2018)

Even so, Leo felt that he could not leave his habits in accessing pornographic content in various media, especially games. Although there are restrictions on religion, Leo feels that pornographic content in games is not a big problem and adds to the excitement in playing.

Frame of Reference

In Frame of Reference, based on the data, each of the subject stated that religion has effect on their perspective on accesing pornographic content in game. Even though, the outcome is different. As for Mamad, Mamad's belief to uphold the teachings of Islam was influenced by his family. In his parents' upbringing, Mamad revealed that his parents were strict in applying the rules of the teachings of Islam. Mamad claimed that

his father, besides being a doctor, was also a teacher of the Koran. Based on that, Mamad did not want to worsen the names of his parents.

Even so, it is not uncommon for Mamad to be treated with domestic violence because he does not follow orders from his parents, especially his mother. He stated that his mother was not reluctant to severely punish Mamad if Mamad did not heed his orders. He admitted that he was often beaten and cut.

This is quite different in Mamad's own family, where he acts as a father and husband. He claimed that his wife allowed and did not forbid Mamad to access pornographic content. As noted above, Mamad also has the power to make his wife stop working. He added, despite the debate at the time, Mamad used the propositions from religion to convince his wife, and that made his wife must follow his will.

From the observations of researchers, the influence of family in Mamad is divided into two parts. First, it is the part of Mamad with his parents, where he must obey all orders given by his parents. If not obeyed, then Mamad will get strict punishment. In addition, he also tried his best to maintain the good name of his parents by practicing the teachings of Islam in daily life. In this case, family becomes a significant factor influencing Mamad's mindset and perception.

Different from Mamad's parent, Leo claimed that his family was not strict in forbidding Leo from playing games. Although Leo's parents initially gave a ban that Leo was not allowed to play games for long because it was considered to damage eye health, but then Leo bought Nintendo, Sega, and Playstation and was still allowed to play games for more than 4 hours a day.

Regarding pornographic content, Leo's family is one of those families who do not pay much attention to this matter. Especially when Leo has been separated from his family since college because he chose to study at Brawijaya University, Malang and at Gadjah Mada University,

Yogyakarta. So then, Leo felt that his family did not have a significant influence on Leo's perception of pornography.

> "The family never forbids. Me to play games. Especially when I'm in college. When it's free to play any game watching porn. The family just reminded that the important thing is that the school is finished."(Leo, 2018)

Even so, Leo admitted that the experience of getting married greatly influenced his point of view. He claimed that because he was getting married, he tried to re-deepen the science of religion and practice it in everyday life.

Table 1.1 Frame of Refences that influenced informant reception

Informant	Frame of References			
	Religion	Culture	Peer Group	Family
Mamad	Islam	Islam culture	People opinion matter	It is important to keep image as a good moslem family
Leo	Islam	No effect	Netral	Deepening islam religion practices

From the interviews of the two informants that have been conveyed by the researchers above, it was found that all the informants saw the pornographic scenes in the game as normal, it was normal not to be questioned because the intimate scenes for them were a bonus. Even so, the two informants when accessing pornographic games will make more efforts to get pornographic content in the game. Mamad will design the character seriously and also fantasize with the character.

In addition, Mamad will also continue to access pornographic content in the game as well as on social media channels reddit and youtube to look for pornographic information or scenes that he may have missed while playing. Similar to Leo, Leo will try his best to get all pornographic content provided by the game. If he find it difficult, Leo will use his

expertise in using programming code skills to get the content. Despite their beliefs in religion, each of the subject still accessing pornographic content in the game. Even, they are willing to provide more effort to get the pornographic content in the game.

With Mamad and Leo stating that pornography games are normal, and understanding the importance of pornography in games, puts Mamad and Leo in the position of Dominant Hegemonic readers. They associate pornography in the game according to what is in the game according to the position of the audience in the Stuart Hall reception model.

Tabel 1.2 Player reception in Stuart Hall reception Model

No.	Informan	Reception	Stuart Hall's Model
1	Mamad	Interested, seeking information in the game and other media	*Dominant-Hegemonic readers*
2	Leo	Liked it, seeking further in the game	*Dominant-Hegemonic readers*

Different condition arise when researchers connect the concept of pornography with the offline world, or the reality of discourse and social levels that exist in society. From the two informants, the positions of the two informants were negotiated. Because both informants felt that the content was not in accordance with the beliefs they believed in.

With the condition of Mamad who likes pornographic content, Mamad feels that the family and colleagues of doctors and nurses cannot accept this reality. In the family together with his father, Mamad had a fear that he violated the rules of the teachings of Islam and would get punished. As for colleagues, doctors and nurses, he felt the need to protect the good name of his parents. However, when he was with a friend playing the game, Mamad was free to express himself that he liked and enjoyed the content of pornography.

Similar to what happened to Leo. Leo likes and searches for

pornographic content in games. However, Leo realized that what he was doing was contrary to his belief in the teachings of Islam. Leo acknowledged that his family had never given advice to deepen the teachings of Islam, but this desire came after Leo had plans to get married. This condition makes Leo feel guilty when accessing pornographic content.

Table 1.3 Player Reception Results

No.	Informant	Understanding pornography		Results
		In-game	Social reality	
1	Mamad	Dominant-Hegemonic readers	Oppositional	Negotiated
	Leo	Dominant-Hegemonic readers	Oppositional	Negotiated

Conclusions

The two informants are men who have grown up, one of whom already has a wife and one child, while Leo will plan to get married this year, where both informants are considered capable of constructing a message more openly.

Researchers also saw that both informants were actively accessing pornographic game content and had more efforts to obtain the desired pornographic content in the game. Moreover, on Mamad, he also tried to access other media to look for pornography. He has a favorite site (fakku.com) that he always visits and looks for other media (social media channels reddit and youtube) to find pornographic content that he gets from games, so for Mamad's access to pornographic content his access becomes intertextual (not just dependent on one media, but also related to other media).

The two informants in this case are bound to social and psychological conditions based on religious and family factors. Both informants were fully aware that what he was doing was the wrong thing to do from the point of view of the religion he believed in (Islam) but still could not stop

from accesing pornographic content. Both informants also stated that the religion and family was an important factor determining the mindset of the informant. In Mamad, family names need to be respected, so that Mamad limits his behavior if he is with colleagues of doctors and nurses and the surrounding community. While in Leo, Leo's plan to develop a household triggers Leo's religious devotion, which is at the same time a source of Leo's guilt when accessing pornography.

Even so, it had effect on the way the access pornography in games. Mamad will play the games if his wife, and doctor's peer-group aren't around. In Leo, as he deepened his religious studies, he admit that nowadays it become less, even he still accessing it daily, for recreational. And both of the subjects admit that they cannot stop accessing pornographic contents in game in the short time, as the still addicted to it.

Based on this study, researchers then suggest that: There should be a further research that can do a comparative study of playing receptions between men and women, as well as those who live in big cities with those who live in rural areas in Indonesia. This will later broaden the scope and enrich research studies on the audience.

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