

## **The Effect of Higgs Domino Game Use on the Communication Behavior of Adolescents in Pekanbaru City**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Gambling has become a major problem for society, made worse by the fast growth of online gambling sites. Things people used to do in person can now be done more easily online. Young people are especially affected by this change. So, this study looked at how playing the Higgs Domino game changes how teenagers in Pekanbaru City communicate. A numbers-based approach was used, with 35 people chosen through a method where participants suggest others, which was needed because it's hard to know how many teens in Pekanbaru City are hooked on online gambling. The data showed a value of 0.646, meaning that playing the Higgs Domino game explained 64.6% of the changes in how teenagers communicate, while the other 35.4% was due to other things. Based on standard guidelines, a coefficient of 0.646 indicates a very powerful link. These results show that online gambling games like Higgs Domino greatly affect how teenagers communicate, highlighting the need for active communication plans, parental monitoring, and rules to reduce the bad social effects of online gambling on young individuals.

**Keywords:** Online Gambling, Higgs Domino, Communication Behavior & Adolescents

### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of science and technology is unstoppable and continues to grow rapidly. In this era of globalization, Indonesia is required to compete with other nations, especially in the development of communication technology. Language is crucial to the development of communication technology. Language is a medium for conveying one's thoughts so that they are understood and elicit responses from others (Daud et al., 2021). Information technology is a set of tools that helps you work with information and perform tasks related to information processing. This also applies to communication tools. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a terminology that encompasses all technical equipment for processing and

conveying information (Setiadi et al., 2009). According to Haag and Keen in Renol (2010).

The progress of technology for information, most notably using devices and smartphones, is now an essential element of people's everyday existence. Devices do more than just help people find information and connect; they also offer fun, social connections, and online money-making opportunities. Improvements in how we connect let people in different places talk instantly using different online platforms. One type of technology use that has grown quickly is online games, which are made to be more interactive, real-looking, and interesting, and can be played with others online. This turns games into more than just fun; they also become a new place for people to connect socially (Syahputra & Amsal, 2018).

As the use of online platforms grows, new ways of sharing information have significantly changed how we talk and connect. New media creates interactions that are different from traditional communication, allowing people to form social ties without being limited by distance or time (Haag & Keen in Renol, 2010; Setiadi et al., 2009). However, these changes could also negatively affect how well people connect, especially for young people, who are in a critical time for growing socially. Young people are at a point where they start to greatly improve their ability to connect, share ideas, and learn to be socially responsible (Efendi, Astuti, & Rahayu, 2017).

From the point of view of social growth, Piaget explained that people slowly learn to connect with others and get used to their social world. In the following stage, people start to learn about social rules, responsibilities, and how important it is to have relationships where people give and take within groups (Rahayu, 2009). However, it is believed that the quick rise of digital technology and the widespread use of new media activities, like online games, are changing young people's social habits from in-person to online communication. Although many studies have talked about how technology and new media affect communication, there are not many studies that specifically look at how using online games—especially those that are similar to gambling—affects how young people communicate, particularly in local areas such as Pekanbaru City. Because of this, this study is important to explore the question of how playing the Higgs Domino game affects how young people communicate in today's digital world.

The existence of this new media must of course be in line with the implementation of democracy as a political principle in most countries around the world (Indrawan and Ilmar, 2018). The term "new media" continues to

generate debate among scholars. The initial impression of the concept of new media is often simply interpreted as interactive media that uses basic computer devices. Subsequent definitions of new media provide a broader scope, as expressed by Croteau (1997:12), who states that new media emerging from technological innovations in the media sector include cable television, satellites, fiber optic technology, and computers. With this technology, users can interactively make choices and provide responses to a variety of media products (Kurmia, 2005).

The presence of online games provides a new feel, especially on gadgets, because they provide intensive and exciting social interaction with others. This is because online games can be played together with friends, creating a sense of enjoyment and playing them for extended periods of time (Rajagukguk & Sofianto, 2020; Tohet & Mauliza, 2021). Along with the development and advancement of internet technology, this has also resulted in an increasing number of online games that can be downloaded and used by the entire community. One of the most frequently used online games is Higgs Domino. Before the rise of online games, children often played in groups, fostering social interaction and cohesiveness. Commonly played games include marbles, spinning tops, baseball, hide-and-seek, and others. These games cannot be played alone but in groups. However, with technological advancements, these traditional games are slowly being forgotten and abandoned. Perhaps some areas still play these games, but some areas have abandoned them, or perhaps no one plays them anymore. They prefer practical, instant games that are easy to play.

The Higgs Domino game exhibits behavioral changes since playing, including changes in family, school, and peer groups. For example, laziness, lack of activity, and a tendency to stay up late at home can lead to decreased academic performance, frequent falling asleep in class, and lack of discipline at school. Meanwhile, within friends, students exhibit temperamental, individualistic behavior, and unhealthy lifestyles (Amin, Azis, and Umakamea, 2022).

Behavior is essentially a human action or activity, both observable and unobservable, manifested through human interaction with their environment, manifested in knowledge, attitudes, and actions. Behavior is important in social settings because, as social beings, humans need the help of others to meet their needs. This fosters bonds of interdependence and cooperation between individuals within society (Auliya, 2017). Behavior is the result of all kinds of experiences and interactions between humans and their environment. Common forms of behavior include knowledge, attitudes, and actions. Human behavior encompasses a comprehensive range of psychological, physiological, and social perspectives. These perspectives are difficult to distinguish between their influence and role in shaping human behavior (Budiharto, 2013).

Currently, online games are very popular among teenagers, because adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. During

adolescence, individuals experience changes in attitudes, physical appearance, emotions, and behavior. Games can no longer be considered solely for children, but rather are a primary market for young people. There are many types of games today, including some specifically for adults and played by teenagers, which can lead to addiction.

In reality, almost all media implements an entertainment function, whether packaged in the form of offline or online games. Through the internet, we can access various forms of entertainment, such as online games, music, movies, and social media. In recent years, online games have experienced rapid development and are also easy to access. They can be accessed via smartphones or computers. The ease of accessing online games makes them accessible to a wide range of groups, including children and teenagers. Teenagers typically access online games to join a community, fill their free time, and relieve stress.

The wide variety of online games makes these modern games popular with many people. They play online games to relieve boredom, or simply to refresh themselves after work or other daily activities. However, in reality, online games actually make players addicted. High levels of online gaming can lead to addiction, which can have detrimental effects, including a lack of prioritization in daily activities, leading to antisocial behavior, and a lack of interest in studying (Kurniawan, 2017).

## **THEOTRICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **New Media**

New media is a term used to describe the convergence between computerization and networked digital communication technologies. New media is anything that can convey information from an information source (intermediary) to a recipient. "New media has two main elements: digital and convergence. The internet is evidence of convergence because it combines many functions of other media, such as audio, video, and text" (McQuail's, 2006: 26). Current technological advances have given rise to many new forms of media in computer-based communication, the internet, and digital systems such as mobile phones.

The Media Dependency Theory, proposed by Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, explains that the greater an individual's dependence on a medium to meet their needs for information, entertainment, and social interaction, the greater the media's influence on their attitudes, perceptions, and behavior. In the context of Higgs Domino game use, media not only serves as a means of entertainment but also as a medium for virtual social interaction. Teenagers who intensively use Higgs Domino tend to rely on the game for entertainment, social recognition, and interaction. This dependence arises because the game provides:

1. instant gratification (rewards, chips, winnings),

2. interaction with other players,
3. escape from boredom or social pressure.

According to this theory, as the level of dependence increases, the media will increasingly influence adolescents' communication patterns, both verbally and nonverbally. Teenagers who interact more through online games are likely to experience:

- 1) a decrease in the intensity of face-to-face communication,
- 2) changes in language style and communication expression,
- 3) a decrease in the quality of interpersonal communication in family and social environments.

Thus, Media Dependency Theory explains that intense use of Higgs Domino can shape and change adolescent communication behavior, because media (games) becomes the main source of fulfilling their social and psychological needs. Developments during adolescence indicate that socialization is not only necessary to fulfill personal needs, but also to fulfill shared needs or the needs of others. According to Irwanto et al. (1996: 258–269), social interactions, or actions and reactions, are influenced by social perception, self-perception, interpersonal attraction, attitudes, and prejudice.

According to Denis McQuail in his book "Theory of Mass Communication" (2011:43), the main characteristics of new media are interconnectedness, access to individual audiences as both senders and receivers of messages, interactivity, diverse uses, and an open character, and its ubiquitous or location-independent nature (Pratyaksa & Putri, 2019).

The presence of new media, in all its forms and functions, of course, does not simply displace existing traditional or traditional media. As seen in Rogers' (1986:2) classification of communication technology development eras, it appears that the existence of new media does not simply displace traditional media, which to this day remain needed by society as a source of information according to their respective characteristics (Kurmia, 2005). New media is a terminology used to describe the convergence of computerized and networked digital communication technologies. New media is anything that can transmit information (an intermediary) from an information source to an information recipient. New media has two main elements: digitalization and convergence. The internet is evidence of convergence because it combines several functions of other media, such as audio, video, and text (McQuail's, 2006:26).

The following are examples of technologies that constitute new media: (a) the internet and websites, (b) digital television/plasma TV, (c) digital cinema/3D cinema, (d) supercomputers/laptops, (e) DVD/CD/Blue-ray discs, (f) MP3 players, (g) mobile phones/PDAs, (h) video games, (i) RSS feeds, (j) video streaming, and others (Kompasiana, 2010). Most technologies described as "new media" are digital, integrative, interactive, manipulable, and networked, dense, compressed, and impartial (Efendi, Astuti, and Rahayu, 2017).

New media emerge as innovations in the application of technology to meet societal needs. New media is a communication technology that facilitates and enables interactivity between users and information (Rice, 1984). Human-created technology evolves and forms new media. New media emerges as a result of technological innovations in the media sector, including cable television, satellites, fiber optic technology, and computers (Croteau, 1997). McQuail divides new media into four categories:

- 1) First, interpersonal communication media, consisting of telephones, mobile phones, and email.
- 2) Second, interactive play media, such as computers, video games, and other internet games.
- 3) Third, information search media in the form of portals or search engines.
- 4) Fourth, collective participation media, such as the use of the internet to share and exchange information, opinions, experiences, and connect through computers, where users use them not merely as tools but also as a source of affection and emotion (Latuheru and Irwansyah, 2018).

### **Game Online**

Games are a form of entertainment that can hone skills and also serve as a learning and educational medium. With the development of technology today, computers have many benefits in various fields, including information, education, business, and communication. According to Wulandari (2012), the word "game" comes from English, meaning "play." According to Kuss & Griffiths (2012), for some teenagers, playing is a fun activity. (Yanti et al., 2019).

"Game" comes from English. In the Indonesian dictionary, the term "game" is "mainstream." In this context, "game" refers to "intellectual playability," which can also be defined as an arena for player decisions and actions, usually in a non-serious context or for the purpose of relaxation. Mobile games are similar to video games, but played on mobile devices. These video games provide engaging social, cognitive, and emotional experiences, which can improve mental health in children and teenagers. Video games can also enhance their sense of well-being.

The term "online game" comes from two words: "game" and "online." "Game" refers to a game, and "online" refers to an internet connection. Therefore, it can be concluded that an online game is a game connected to an internet connection or LAN, allowing players to connect with other players playing the same game. Online games are a form of gambling connected via the internet. Online games are not limited to the device used; they can be played on computers, laptops, smartphones, and even tablets. As long as the gadget is connected to the internet, online games can be played (Suryadi, 2018).

Online games are a new lifestyle for some people, including young people and students. Nowadays, we often find internet cafes (warnets) in cities and villages, facilitating online gaming. We find a wide variety of online games, from war games, racing games, sports games, and more. Games can be played with specific rules, resulting in winners and losers, usually in a frivolous context or for the purpose of relaxation (Surbakti, 2017). Adolescents are considered more prone to and more susceptible to online gaming addiction than adults. Adolescence, a period of instability, tends to be more prone to experimenting with new things (Jordan & Andersen, 2016). Adolescence is also stereotyped as a problematic period (Hurlock, 2010), which makes experimenting with new things risky and problematic behavior. As a result, adolescents addicted to online games tend to lose interest in other activities, feel anxious when unable to play (Jannah, Mudjiran, & Nirwana, 2015), and experience declines in academic achievement, social relationships, and health (Novrialdy, Education and Padang, 2019).

Popular online games are typically bound by End-User License Agreements (EULAs). The consequences of violating such agreements vary depending on the contract, ranging from warnings to termination, as in the immersive 3D world of Second Life, where breach of contract will result in warnings, suspensions, and termination for players, depending on the violation. Enforcing EULAs is difficult due to the high economic costs of human intervention and low returns to the company. Only in large-scale games is it profitable for companies to enforce their EULAs. Edward Castronova writes that "there are issues of ownership and governance that significantly confound state affairs." He has divided online governance into "good governance" and "weird governance." Castronova also mentions that synthetic worlds are a good way to test government and management (Surbakti, 2017).

### **Higgs Domino**

The Higgs Domino game is an online game application released on November 12, 2018, and has been downloaded by over 10,000,000 users (Google, Play Store, Higgs Domino Island Details). This application contains a wide variety of games, a very popular game to date. It is highly sought after by many people, especially teenagers and adults, because it is easy to play and relaxed. Higgs Domino Island, or often called Scatter, is an online game application that can be downloaded for free from the Google Play Store and easily played on Android phones. This application contains many game

features, including card games, slots, dice, and more. This application. Social pathology is the study of social phenomena considered "sick," caused by social factors or the study of their origins and characteristics, diseases related to the nature of human existence in society. This aligns with Kartini Kartono's position that social pathology is any behavior that contradicts norms of goodness, local stability, patterns of simplicity, morals, property rights, family solidarity, harmonious neighborhood living, discipline, kindness, and formal law.

(Kartono, 2017, p. 1) Social pathology is also seen as a form of individual action within society or society itself that has the potential to create social problems and disorganization. The Higgs Domino game phenomenon is very popular among the community, including teenagers who are currently studying in Mengkapan Village, Sungai Apit District, known as Higgs Domino. This application can be used for online gaming. Higgs Domino is arguably a popular and frequently played game. What makes this game so popular is the ability to share chips or gold coins with friends. Unlike other games, this game provides access for players to share.

This means that players can share chips with each other, making it easier for many players. The Higgs Domino game offers a betting feature, or "BET," as the game uses in-game terms, in almost every game. Therefore, if a player loses, the bet will be taken, reducing the number of coins or chips they have available for playing. Based on a preliminary study by researchers, many teenagers in Mengkapan Village, Sungai Apit District, play online games, including Higgs Domino. This is done when they are unemployed or during their usual playing hours. Researchers have observed that the prevalence of online game play among teenagers in Mengkapan Village, Sungai Apit District, has impacted their education, even disrupting their communication with others. For those still in school, their education and study time have also been disrupted. Currently, the development of the globalization era has had a major impact.

After seeing the development of this game, vendors or game makers added a new game, a slot game, which can generate large amounts of chips for lucky players. This then led to many people becoming curious and wanting to try it. Winning players were delighted and addicted, while losing players also tried to buy more chips to try their luck. This curiosity led to an addiction to the High Domino game. What made players even more addicted was that the chips won or earned from this game could be sold and generated income.

According to the media dependency theory, the more someone likes or continually uses a particular media, the more dependent they will become and the more difficult it will be to distance themselves from it. According to Melvin DeFleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach (1975: 261-263), the greater the need for media, the stronger the dependency. The greater the likelihood that the media and the messages conveyed to them will have an effect. Certainly, the formation of dependency influences individual behavior. In this case, new media such as online games makes many people increasingly dependent,

making it difficult to stay away from them. Moreover, for many people, especially students, playing online games is one way to spend hours without getting bored. Furthermore, with the support of features, tactics, and teams, playing games makes someone never want to leave.

### **Communication Behavior**

According to Soeharto (in Tu'u, 2004; 32), behavior is defined as the result of the learning process. This learning process involves interaction between the individual and the world around them. As a result of this interaction, the responses an individual displays will be influenced by things or events the individual has experienced as well as by the current situation (Amanda, 2016).

According to Purwanto (1998), behavior is a form of activity originating from within a person. Meanwhile, according to Skinner, a behaviorist, as cited by Notoatmodjo (2007), behavior is all human activities, whether directly or indirectly observable, or even unobservable from outsiders. According to Walgito (2005:10), behavior is a manifestation of psychic life. As is known, behavior or activity in an individual or organism does not arise spontaneously, but rather as a result of a stimulus affecting that individual or organism. The Ministry of National Education (2005) states that "behavior is a response or reaction to a stimulus or the environment." From a biological perspective, behavior is an activity or activity of the organism in question.

Behavior is fundamentally goal-oriented. In other words, behavior is generally motivated by the desire to achieve a specific goal. The specific goal is not always consciously known to the individual. The drive that motivates an individual's behavioral patterns, to a certain extent, resides in the subconscious (Hersey & Blanch 2004). The following is a definition of behavior as a construct of theories and research:

- a. Behavior is something caused by something
- b. Behavior is directed toward a specific goal
- c. Behavior that can be observed (thinking, acting, and acting). Perception is also important in achieving goals.
- d. Motivated behavior.

Communication is the process of exchanging messages, whether information, thoughts, or feelings, between the communicator (the sender) and the recipient (the recipient) with mutual understanding. This understanding is reflected in the root meaning of the word "communication," "communis," meaning "same meaning" (Effendi, 1997: 9). Humans are social creatures, so communication is essential to help them interact with others. Because, of course, at every opportunity, we need communication to shape our understanding of others, such as how they are used for the common good.

Most people have used communication as a tool to see and understand others holistically, avoiding ineffective communication, which occurs when there is a mismatch between what is desired and what actually happens, leading to loss of direction or misdirection. This is especially true in an environment or organization with various individuals with varying characters

and traits, as well as varying levels of education and understanding (Supriatno and Romadhon, 2017).

The purpose of communication is to change attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts. Communication can change a person's attitudes, opinions, and behaviors so that their social context aligns with the information conveyed by the informant. Therefore, in essence, communication aims to convey information that can be understood by others. The functions of communication include the following:

- 1) To convey information.
- 2) As a means of conveying opinions so that they are accepted by the wider community or those concerned.
- 3) As a form of interaction with others.
- 4) To broaden insight and knowledge about something.

Thus, through communication, knowledge will be transferred between one party and another. In the book "Communication Theory, Perspectives, Varieties, and Applications," various definitions of communication are presented by experts. John R. Wenburg and William W. Wilmot, as well as Kenneth K. Sereno and Edward M. Bodaken, state that there are three understandings of communication:

- a) Communication as a one-way (linear) action: Communication as a one-way (linear) action, where the message is imagined as flowing from the source through several components to the recipient. This definition aligns with Everet M. Rogers's opinion, which states that communication is the process by which an idea is transferred from the source to one or more recipients, with the intention of changing their behavior. Communication is the deliberate process of conveying stimuli to elicit a response from others. In this context, communication is carried out intentionally by one person to convey a message to another in order to fulfill their needs, such as persuading or explaining something. Therefore, it can be concluded that the concept of communication as a one-way process focuses on the effective delivery of messages and explains that communication activities are persuasive.
- b) Communication as interaction: Communication is also understood as a form of interactive communication, namely communication with a cause-and-effect process or alternating action-reaction. In this context, communication involves the communicator conveying messages, both verbally and nonverbally, to the recipient in an active, dynamic, and reciprocal manner. Communication as an interaction process is seen as more dynamic than communication as a one-way action. However, this view remains mechanical and static because it distinguishes between the sender and receiver of the message.
- c) Communication as a transaction: Communication as a transaction, as defined by Pearson and Nelson, is the process of understanding various meanings. Similarly, Tubbs and Moss argue that communication is the

process of constructing meaning between two or more people. In this context, communication does not differentiate between sender and receiver, and is no longer source-oriented, as it involves multiple individuals and appears to be dynamic. One advantage of conceptualizing communication as a transaction is that it is not limited to intentional communication or observable responses (V.A.R. Barao et al., 2022).

Communication behavior can be observed from the media used to communicate, one of which is online mass communication. McQuail (in Jalaluddin 2007) suggests that the level of satisfaction and usefulness of a medium significantly influence the audience's motives for using it. This means that each audience member has a reason for using media as a means of satisfying their needs.

According to Savolainen (2014), factors that influence communication behavior include the perception of reliability and trustworthiness of information. This can significantly influence the selection and use of information sources. The importance of this criterion is emphasized when information seekers encounter conflicting information. In this situation, they must assess the credibility and theoretical sources of available alternatives. Here are some factors that influence communication behavior:

- 1) **Development:** The level of speech development varies and is closely related to child development. Parents have a significant influence on a child's ability to communicate. An individual's development determines the type of communication they choose.
- 2) **Perception:** Perception is a personal view of what is happening. This is formed by knowledge and experience. Differences in perception can become a stumbling block to effective communication. On the other hand, a person's own perception is difficult to change once it has become deeply ingrained.
- 3) **Values:** Values can influence the interpretation of messages and how individuals interpret ideas from others. If people's values differ and there is no adjustment between individuals, conflict is likely to occur during communication.
- 4) **Emotions:** Emotions can cause someone to misinterpret the message they receive. If emotions influence communication, they are interpreted as a person's subjective feelings and influence how they interact with others. If a person communicating cannot control their emotions, arguments will arise due to the emotions that arise.
- 5) **Sociocultural Background:** Culture is the result of learning how to act, think, and feel. Cultural influences set boundaries for how a person acts and communicates. In this regard, the communicator must be able to adapt to the culture of the recipient for effective communication.
- 6) **Gender:** Men and women communicate differently. Girls typically have better development of the communication center in the brain than boys.
- 7) **Knowledge:** Using common language is appropriate if the sender and recipient have different levels of knowledge. The message will be unclear

if the words used are unfamiliar to the recipient. Because the use of common language is a very helpful factor in communication, bridging differences that arise.

- 8) Environment: A person can communicate better in a comfortable environment. A lack of freedom can lead to confusion and tension. Environmental disturbances can also interfere with the message being sent. A comfortable environment greatly assists the communication process and is an influential factor in communication.

According to Rakhmat, behavioral characteristics can be classified into three components as follows:

- 1) Cognitive component, which is the intellectual aspect related to what a person knows. The cognitive component represents what an individual believes. This can be knowledge, views, beliefs, or other things related to how people perceive.
- 2) Affective component, which is the emotional aspect of sociopsychological factors. The affective component is the feeling that concerns the emotional aspect of an object. The object is perceived as pleasant or unpleasant, of good or bad quality, and so on.
- 3) The conative component is the volitional aspect related to habits or the desire to act. The conative component is a person's tendency to act, whether positive or negative. This component contains the tendency to act or react to something in a certain way.

Therefore, communication behavior in adolescents is essentially an activity within the adolescent themselves. The actor is also what the organism does, whether directly or indirectly observable. In this case, behavior occurs when there is something necessary to elicit a reaction, namely a stimulus. This means that a certain stimulus will produce a certain reaction.

### **Dependency Theory: The Effects of Mass Communication on Communication Behavior**

The Dependency Theory of Mass Communication Effects, developed in 1975 by Melvin DeFleur and Sandra Ball Rokeach in Morissan (2013:51), puts forward their idea of dependency theory, which discusses the power of mass media to influence audiences due to the audience's dependence on mass media content. Dependency theory's basic assumption is that media influence is determined by the relationship between the broader social system, the media's role within that system, and the audience's relationship with the media. Therefore, according to DeFleur and Rokeach, audience dependence on the media is integral, encompassing three parties: the media, the audience, and the surrounding social system. In this regard, Rokeach and DeFleur, in presenting their idea of "dependency theory," emphasize a systems-wide approach. The following is a diagram of Sandra Ball's Dependency Theory Model Rokeach and Melvin L. DeFleur (V.A.R. Barao et al., 2022).

This model shows that social institutions and media systems interact with audiences to create needs, interests, and motives. This, in turn, influences

audiences to choose from a variety of media and non-media sources, which can then result in various dependencies. In line with this model, a person's level of dependency can be determined by the intensity of their internet use. According to Horrigan in Hamka (2015:101), there are two fundamental factors that must be observed: the frequency of internet use and the duration of each internet access. The Graphic, Visualization & Usability Center, the Georgia Institute of Technology, in Hamka (2015:101), classifies internet users into three categories based on the intensity of their internet use. People who depend on a particular media segment will be influenced cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally by that segment (Darini, 2017). According to Sendjaja in Bungin (2009:287), further discussion of this theory focuses on the types of effects that can be studied through this theory.

### **Media Dependency Theory**

Dependency theory was initially proposed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur (1976). This theory combines elements from various communication disciplines. Dependency Theory integrates various perspectives. First, it uses perspectives from psychology and material from social category theory. Second, it integrates a systems perspective with elements from a causal approach. Third, it combines elements of uses and gratifications research with those from the media effects tradition. Finally, a contextualist philosophy is incorporated into the theory, which also shares the traditional concern with the content of media messages and their influence on audiences. Research generated by this model tends to be more descriptive than explanatory or predictive (AL' IKRAR, 2020).

Dependency Theory assumes that the more a person relies on media for their needs, the more important the media becomes in their life, and therefore the more influence the media will have on them. From a macroscopic social perspective, the more people depend on media, the more media institutions will change, the more influence the media will have, and the greater the media's role in society.

This study uses Media Dependency Theory. Simply put, media dependency theory explains that the greater the influence of a medium on its users, the stronger the individual's dependence on the medium. According to Melvin DeFleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach (1975: 261-263), the greater the need for media, the stronger the sense of dependency. This increases the likelihood that the media and the messages conveyed to them will have an effect. Not everyone will be equally influenced by the same media. However, those who have a greater need for a particular medium will feel a greater dependency, resulting in a stronger influence on their lives.

This theory is particularly striking in today's era, where individuals have begun to become dependent on existing media. Many of them ultimately develop media dependencies, both positively and negatively. For example, many teenagers today are highly dependent on online media or new media. Addiction to video games is also a problem currently affecting teenagers.

Dependency theory proposes an integral relationship between the audience, the media, and the broader social system. This theory predicts that people depend on media information to fulfill specific needs and achieve specific goals. Although numerous studies have been conducted to explain the impact of increased use of gaming media and the popularity of games as a trend among teenagers, very few studies have used this theory as a framework to examine how games have become a necessity in people's lives, especially among teenagers.

Ball-Rokeach has identified dependency as a relationship in which an individual's efforts to achieve their goals depend on the media. These goals relate to media use and other aspects of society. Each of these goals is categorized into two dimensions: social and self. Self-needs refer to media users' ability to relax and play, while social needs involve the interaction processes that occur in the media. This theory is particularly salient in today's era, where every individual or group has begun to depend on the media. Many of them ultimately develop a dependency on the media, both positive and negative. This study uses this media dependency system theory to examine the influence of games on communication behavior in teenagers.

For example, in today's era, many teenagers or young people are dependent on video games and addicted to them to fulfill their gaming needs and the desire to become professional gamers. This has become a case study among today's teenagers, particularly in Mengkapan Village, Sungai Apit District. Note the emphasis in this statement. When we use media to interpret the social world, we allow the media to shape our expectations. "The greater the need, the greater the dependence, the greater the likelihood" that the media and the messages they produce will have an effect. Not everyone will be influenced equally.

## **METHODS**

The method used by the researcher in this study is quantitative. According to Arifin (2014:29), quantitative research is research used to answer problems through careful measurement techniques on specific variables, resulting in generalizable conclusions, regardless of the time and situation, and the type of data collected, especially quantitative data. According to the UM Scientific Paper Writing Guidelines (2010:14), quantitative research is generally complex, ranging from the content of the study to various substantive and fundamental theories to operational technical matters (Victoria et al., 2021). By using quantitative research, the presentation of the value of the discussion can be expressed numerically. Quantitative analysis is the analysis of data obtained from respondents that has been collected, then the problems faced, so this method will provide certainty in decision-making.

In quantitative correlational research, a sample size of 30–50 respondents can still be used to test relationships between variables, especially in exploratory research aimed at identifying trends in influence and patterns of relationships (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Thus, a sample size of 35 respondents

meets the minimum threshold for statistical analysis and is considered sufficient to provide an empirical picture of the influence of Higgs Domino game use on adolescent communication behavior. This selection of technique and sample size is expected to produce contextually valid findings, although it is not intended for broad generalization.

This type of research uses a survey method. According to Cohen and Nomion (1982), survey research is actually a type of descriptive research. Survey research is a research activity that collects data at a specific point in time with the following important objectives: (Mustafa et al., 2020):

- a) Describing the natural state of affairs at that time.
- b) Identifying measurable current conditions for comparison.
- c) Determining the relationship between specific events.
- d) Survey research is used to gather information in the form of opinions from a large number of people regarding a specific topic or issue.

Survey Research According to Kerlinger (1973), survey research is research conducted on large or small populations, but the data studied is data from samples drawn from that population, so that relative occurrences, distributions, and relationships between variables can be discovered through in-depth observation. The descriptive method, also known as a survey, generally aims to describe a phenomenon and also to illustrate relationships, test hypotheses, predict, and examine their implications. Descriptive research can be conducted using survey methods, continuous descriptive methods, case studies, job analysis, action research, and library research (Sinambela, 2014).

This study uses a descriptive quantitative approach that aims to systematically describe the research object and explain the relationships between variables based on empirical data. Descriptive research is often categorized as non-experimental because researchers do not manipulate or control variables, but rather observe phenomena as they occur naturally (West, 1982, cited in Darmawan, 2013). This approach is appropriate for studying social phenomena inherent in everyday practice, such as adolescents' involvement in online gaming.

The primary objective of this study is to obtain empirical evidence regarding the influence of Higgs Domino game use on adolescents' communication behavior. Therefore, this study uses two main variables: Higgs Domino game use as the independent variable (X) and communication behavior as the dependent variable (Y). Data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed to measure the intensity and characteristics of game use, as well as changes in interpersonal communication patterns among adolescents.

The descriptive quantitative design allows for statistical analysis of the relationships between variables, providing measurable insights into the extent to which Higgs Domino game use influences communication behavior. However, it is important to acknowledge several methodological limitations. First, because it used a non-experimental design, this study cannot establish causal relationships with absolute certainty, but rather identifies patterns of

influence and association. Second, the use of non-probability sampling limits the applicability of the findings beyond the studied population. Third, reliance on self-reported data may introduce response bias, as participants' perceptions and honesty may vary.

Despite these limitations, the chosen methodology remains appropriate for an exploratory investigation of an under-researched and context-specific phenomenon. These findings are expected to provide meaningful empirical insights to add to the growing literature on digital gaming, media addiction, and adolescent communication behavior, particularly in the local context of Pekanbaru City. To obtain the necessary data for this research, a source is needed from the research object, known as the population. A population is the entire object being studied. This population is often referred to as the universe. Members of a population can be living or non-living objects, including humans, whose characteristics can be measured or observed (Sahrum & Salim, 2012). The population in this study was teenagers who actively play the Higgs Domino game in Pekanbaru.

Data analysis in quantitative research is conducted using statistical techniques appropriate to the research problem and objectives, as well as the type of data being analyzed for hypothesis testing. The Simple Linear Regression Formula is as follows (Amanda, 2016). The categorized data is then entered into the formula using a simple regression formula, which is useful for determining the relationship between predictor variables and criterion variables.

## RESULTS

Correlation analysis is a method for determining whether there is a relationship between variables. According to Sukmadinata (2006), correlational research aims to examine the relationship between one variable and another (Setiani & Rafianti, 2018). Decision-making is based on the calculated  $r$  and the tabulated  $r$ : if the calculated  $r < r$  table, then  $H_0$  is accepted and  $H_a$  is rejected. Conversely, if the calculated  $r > r$  table, then  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted.

### Hypothesis

$H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between the Higgs Domino game and communication behavior.

$H_a$ : There is a significant relationship between the Higgs Domino game and communication behavior.

### Decision-Making

a. If the significance value is  $> 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is accepted.

b. If the significance value is  $< 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected.

c. Strength of the Relationship

1) A Pearson correlation value of 0.00-0.20 indicates no correlation.

2) A Pearson correlation value of 0.21-0.40 indicates a weak correlation.

- 3) A Pearson correlation value of 0.41-0.60 indicates a moderate correlation.
- 4) A Pearson correlation value of 0.61-0.80 indicates a strong correlation.
- 5) A Pearson correlation value of 0.81-1.00 indicates a perfect correlation.

d. Positive and Negative Relationships

Table Correlation Test

Correlations			
		HIGGSDOMINO	PERILAKU KOMUNIKASI
HIGGSDOMINO	Pearson Correlation	1	.804**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	35	35
PERILAKU KOMUNIKASI	Pearson Correlation	.804**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	35	35

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the output table above, the sig. (2-tailed) value between the Higgs Domino Game (X1) and communication behavior (Y) is  $0.00 < 0.05$ , which means there is a significant correlation between the Higgs Domino Game variable and communication behavior. If  $0.00 < 0.05$ ,  $H_0$  is rejected.

This means that if  $H_0$  is rejected, there is a significant relationship between the Higgs Domino game and communication behavior. Furthermore, the Pearson correlation value obtained is 0.804. Returning to the correlation degree guidelines, if the Pearson correlation value is 0.61–0.80, there is a strong correlation. Based on the calculated r value for the relationship between the Higgs Domino Game and communication behavior, it is  $0.804 > 0.333$ . Therefore,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted.

Table Simple Linear Regression Test

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	6.168	7.488		.824	.416		
	HIGGSDOMINO	1.013	.131	.804	7.754	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: PERILAKU KOMUNIKASI

Hypothesis

$H_0$ : There is no significant effect between the Higgs Domino game and communication behavior.

Ha: There is a significant effect between the Higgs Domino game and communication behavior.

Decision Making

a. If the sign value is > 0.05, Ho is accepted.

b. If the sign value is < 0.05, Ho is rejected.

The constant value (a) is 6.168, while the Higgs Domino game value (b/regression coefficient) is 1.013. Therefore, the regression equation can be written as:

$$Y = a + Bx$$

$$Y = 6.168 + 1.013X$$

This equation can be translated as:

The constant value is 6.168, meaning that the consistent value of the communication behavior variable is 6.168. The regression coefficient of X is 1.013, indicating that for every 1% increase in the Higgs Domino value, the communication behavior value increases by 6.168, and vice versa. This regression coefficient is positive, indicating a positive effect of variable x on y. Decision Making in the Simple Linear Regression Test: Based on the significance value from the coefficient table, a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  is obtained, meaning Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted. It can be concluded that the Higgs Domino Game variable (X) influences the communication behavior variable (Y). Based on the t-value, the calculated t-value is  $7.754 >$  the t-table value of 2.035, thus concluding that the Higgs Domino Game variable (X) influences the communication behavior variable (Y).

Table Model Summary

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.804 <sup>a</sup>	.646	.635	8.43310
a. Predictors: (Constant), HIGGSDOMINO				
b. Dependent Variable: PERILAKU KOMUNIKASI				

The table above shows a correlation/relationship (R) value of 0.804. The output obtained an R-square value of 0.646, indicating that the independent variable (Higgs domino) influences the dependent variable (communication behavior) by 64.6%, while the remaining 35.4% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study. According to the table of guidelines for interpreting correlations, the coefficient interval is 0.646, indicating a very strong correlation.

The results of this study indicate a strong relationship between adolescents' dependence on Higgs Domino game content and changes in their communication behavior. Indicators of dependence—such as frequency of play, duration of play over a specific time period (daily, weekly, and monthly),

and the attractiveness of in-game content (e.g., the distribution of free chips or coins)—showed patterns consistent with digital game addiction reported in previous studies. Existing literature suggests that frequent exposure to reward-based game mechanics can reinforce repetitive behavior and increase the risk of dependence, particularly among adolescents still developing self-regulation skills (Griffiths, 2005; Kuss and Griffiths, 2012). The predominance of male respondents in this study aligns with previous research showing that males are generally more susceptible to online game addiction due to their higher competitiveness, sensitivity to rewards, and propensity for risk-taking (Gentile et al., 2011).

From a theoretical perspective, these findings contribute to the application of Media Addiction Theory in the context of games similar to online gambling. This theory suggests that individuals who rely heavily on media to satisfy cognitive, affective, and behavioral needs are more likely to experience media influence. In this study, cognitive effects were seen in altered thought patterns focused on rewards in games, affective effects emerged through emotional responses such as joy or frustration during play, and behavioral effects were reflected in repetitive and recurrent gaming habits. This empirical evidence extends Media Addiction Theory by demonstrating how interactive digital games, rather than traditional mass media, can serve as a powerful medium for creating dependency that alters adolescents' communication behavior and daily routines.

The implications of these findings are significant for various stakeholders. For parents, increasing awareness and monitoring of adolescents' gaming habits is crucial, particularly regarding time management and exposure to gambling-like features within games. Educators can integrate digital literacy and media awareness programs into school curricula to help adolescents critically evaluate digital content and develop healthier communication practices. Policymakers, on the other hand, should consider strengthening regulations regarding online games that contain gambling elements, including age restrictions, warning labels, and restrictions on reward-based mechanisms that encourage excessive play.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The sample size was relatively small and limited to male adolescents, limiting the applicability of the findings to different genders and the broader population. Furthermore, the use of a descriptive, non-experimental design precludes definitive causal conclusions. Future research should utilize larger, more diverse samples, include female respondents, and consider longitudinal or experimental designs to better examine causal relationships. Further research could also explore mediating variables such as parental control, peer influence, and psychological well-being to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term impact of online gambling-style games on adolescent communication behavior.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the Higgs Domino game significantly influences adolescent communication behavior. This is due to the frequency and duration of Higgs Domino game play among adolescents, resulting in communication behaviors such as reluctance to respond to others' conversations and choosing to focus on the game itself, difficulty concentrating when interacting with others while playing, difficulty controlling emotions, and difficulty digesting messages conveyed by others while playing the Higgs Domino game.

The Higgs Domino game significantly influences communication behavior based on the collected and processed data, followed by descriptive analysis, simple linear regression, and correlation tests. The correlation test results show that the calculated  $r$  is greater than the table  $r$ , indicating a correlation between the Higgs Domino game and communication behavior, and the relationship between the two variables is classified as very strong for adolescents.

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