

# Male Students' Perceptions of Female Gamer Credibility in Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Along with the development of IT and the internet, online games emerged that became a place for people to entertain or even unwind from their daily activities. The emergence of this online game created a new profession with many devotees, one of which is a female gamer. Through content created by female gamers, it raises people's perceptions of the credibility of these female gamers. This study discusses the perception of male students on the credibility of female gamers. This research aims to find out how male students perceive the credibility of female gamers in playing games. The researcher collected primary data through in-depth interviews with four male students as informants and used a simple survey as initial data. The researcher uses a qualitative approach, a case study research method. The results of this study indicate that each person's perception is different on the credibility of female gamers. In credibility theory, there is what is called prior ethos. Prior ethos affects the communication perception of the communicator before he communicates, so that in this study, the ethos perception that female gamers have is analyzed.

**Keywords:** *credibility, female gamer, game online, perception*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that is well known for its patriarchal culture, where there is a stereotype that men must be stronger and dominate women in any case. (Baron R., & Byrne D, 2011) stated that there are stereotypes about women who are weaker and cannot take over men's jobs. And the consequence is that when women try to enter a world where most of them are jobs that men usually do, they will be underestimated and tend to be underestimated.

The rapid development in technology has made the IT (Information Technology) industry a very large industry. It has become a cog in the world economy, especially in Indonesia. Although now Indonesia is a world country that can be categorized as a developed country. Indonesia is as advanced as other countries such as Malaysia, India, Japan, and Australia for IT affairs. This is evidenced by the rhythm of IT development in Indonesia which is in line with Indonesia and makes Indonesia a large enough IT market that can be compared to other countries. And of course, the internet as the intermediary will further advance IT in Indonesia.

Although the internet speed in Indonesia is not as fast as in other countries, there are now more internet users in Indonesia and by 2021 it has reached more than 200 million users. The internet has become a primary need, especially for urban communities whose daily life can never be separated from the internet. Especially during the

current pandemic, everyone around the world uses the internet for daily activities, for example for school, college, and business activities. Moreover, many people work from home, so internet access is needed to carry out work activities. Along with the progress of the IT world and the internet, online games have also progressed, such as the increasing number of players who make online games the main place/container for their work to gender equality in playing which has made many female gamers appear in the world of online games. For comparison, in 2017 there were 1.13 billion gamers and 32% of them were women. Then in 2019, there were 38% of female gamers out of 1.33 billion game lovers. At the beginning of the development of online games, few of them who came from women played online games, because there were still a few game genres that were less feminine or worthy of being played by women, making the number of female gamers initially quite small and not all female gamers were able to play games that played by male gamers.

For now, the professional data for female gamers is 51%, while for men, it is 49%. The initial paradigm was that online games were designed for men only. And there are rarely large-scale online games produced for female gamers, thus requiring them to adapt to online games that men mostly play. As time goes by and more and more online games have emerged, the paradigm of online games has changed into a unisex activity that can be done by both

women and men, although men still dominate it as the driving force of the online gaming world.

Female gamers from Indonesia are also quite competitive with other players who are not from Indonesia, such as India, China, Thailand, Japan, Korea, etc. Through games played by female gamers, the perception of the female gamer's credibility arises whether she is credible or not. Furthermore, the author will focus more on this research on male students' perceptions of the credibility of female gamers in playing games. Because based on the observations of researchers, unconsciously there is always a perception that only men dominate in playing games.

Along with the development of the times, stereotypes, perceptions, and assumptions began to emerge that female gamers in Indonesia use feminine clothes to play games to attract attention and seek sensation so that their careers can increase.

According to the researcher, each person's perception of the credibility of female gamers is different, so the researcher wants to know the perception of male students on the credibility of female gamers in Indonesia. Therefore, the researcher makes this topic of perception a research topic. The topic of research on perception is important because with the perception of a person, an individual can realize and understand the state of the individual concerned.

## 2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

### 2.1. Communication Theory

Communication is an interaction process that involves two or more people. When communicating, there is usually a process of sending and receiving messages from the communicator to the communicant. Gerald R. Miller states that communication occurs when a source conveys a message to the recipient, with the intention of influencing the behavior of the recipient of the message.

From the above definition it can be stated that communication is a process of exchanging one's ideas, thoughts, and views. Communication is a transition of information generated by a stimulus from a source to which the recipient responds.

#### Lasswell's Communication Theory

Harold Lasswell put forward a simple communication model and is still being applied as a basic communication model. The models are: Who (Who) – Says what (Says What) – With what media (In Which Channel) – To whom (To Whom) – And with what effect (With What Effect).

#### 2.1.1. Communicator

The communicator has the meaning as a reasonable human who wishes to convey a message to realize a communication. When a communicator communicates, what matters is not only what he says, but also his own circumstances.

"He doesn't communicate what he says, he communicates what he is."

Aristotle stated that the character of the communicator is called the *ethos*. *Ethos* includes good thoughts, good morals, and good intentions (good sense, good moral character, good will) meaning that when the communicator communicates, what affects the audience is not only the message but also his appearance and condition so that everything gets an assessment from the audience at the time. at that time.

### 2.2. Perception

Perception is a process carried out by involving the human senses to compile, recognize, and understand sensory information to provide an overview and an understanding of the surrounding environment. According to Khairani (2012:62), perception is a process that prioritizes the stimulus received by the individual through the receptor device, namely the senses.

In general, perceptions can be grouped into several types. the types of perception are as follows:

- **Visual Perception**, which is a process of the emergence of perceptions that are received by individuals by using their sense of sight, namely the eyes.
- **Auditory Perception**, which is a process of perception that is received by the individual through the sense of hearing, namely the ear.
- **Perception of touch**, which is a process of perception that is received by the individual through the sense of touch, namely the skin
- **Olfactory perception**, namely the process of the emergence of perceptions received by individuals through the sense of smell, namely the nose
- **Taste perception**, which is a process of perception that is obtained by individuals through the sense of taste, namely the tongue.

### 2.3. Credibility

**Credibility** is a set of communication perceptions about the characteristics of communicators. This definition contains several things:

- Credibility is the perception of communicate; so it is not inherent from the communicator. (Inherent in the Indonesian dictionary means inseparable; attached.)
- Credibility can change and depends on the perpetrator's perception (communicate), the topic discussed is the situation.
- Things that affect the communicate perception of the communicator before he communicates are called prior *ethos*.

There are several sources of someone obtaining prior *ethos* including:

- Direct experience, because the name of the communicator is known everywhere so that people know the integrity of his personality.

- Vicarious experience, people are attracted because the communicator's name or photo often appears in the mass media or on social media
- Prior ethos due to sponsorship (by sponsorship and endorsement), people are attracted to the communicator because the party (sponsor) who supports the communicator is an organization with high status or a sponsor whose brand is well known.

#### **2.4. Online Games**

The game comes from the English language, namely games which means game. Game is a video game played by players through computers or laptops, gadgets/smartphones and consoles.

Online game is a game that can only operate using an internet connection, Samuel (2011:7) states online games as games that allow interaction between one person and another to entertain themselves by completing a challenge in the virtual world. [1]

#### **2.5. Verbal And Nonverbal Communication**

**Verbal communication** is communication that is usually in the form of oral or written, an example is the use of words. Verbal communication is usually in the form of words and is carried out face-to-face or by interacting using social media or mobile phones as intermediaries. While verbal communication through writing can be done using media such as letters, postcards, chat on social media, and so on. (Tri Indah Kusmawati, 2016) [2]

**Nonverbal communication** is communication that is used in a form without words. In real life, nonverbal communication is much more widely used than verbal communication. In communicating almost automatically nonverbal communication is used. Therefore, nonverbal communication is permanent and always exists. Nonverbal communication is more honest about what you want to say because it is spontaneous.

#### **2.6. Artifactual Communication**

Artifactual communication is part of non-verbal communication. Artifactual communication has instructions, namely perceiving someone from body shape, how to dress, cosmetics, clothes, bags, rank, and accessories used. Some people are often deceived by a person's appearance, for example, people with mustaches, beards, long hair, jeans and tattooed bodies are often perceived as bad people. (Pieter, 2017).

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative approach with the aim of observing in depth a phenomenon. Qualitative research is a research activity that involves researchers in the place

where the research is conducted (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). [3]

According to Moleong (2011), qualitative research is descriptive. So that the data collected is in the form of text and images, not numbers as in quantitative research. Data can be collected from interviews, notes and field observations, photos, and other documents. (Carlina & Paramita, 2017).

As an approach, the key to case study research is to investigate a particular event, situation, or social condition and to provide insight into how a particular event or situation occurred (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012). [4]

In this study, the subjects studied were active male students who already had experience in playing online games. The object of this research is the student's perception of the credibility of female gamers in Indonesia. The criteria for informants are as follows:

- Active male students 18-25 years old
- Play online games
- Have experience playing games for 1 month and know / have seen female gamers in online games

Data collection techniques are the main steps that must be taken by researchers in researching a case, this has the aim of making the authors collect the necessary data. Data collection can use primary and secondary data. Primary data is a source of data that directly provides data to data collectors while secondary data is a source of information that is collected indirectly to authors, including through documents.

To review and support this research, the data collection technique needed is interviews, documentation studies, literature studies and also a simple survey of research subjects.

#### **3.1. Interview**

Interview is a form of communication between the questioner and the source of information or informants interviewed through direct communication (Yusuf, 2014). Interviews are usually conducted between 1 person and another person so that informative information is obtained. The researcher conducted interviews with 4 male students who were considered credible because they met the criteria of the object of this study as informants in this study. Some of the interviews were conducted face-to-face or through online virtual meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented the face-to-face interview process. Interviews conducted in virtual online meetings were obtained by means of informants sending voice notes to researchers

Literature study is a theoretical study as well as references and scientific literature related to the culture, values and norms that exist in the social situation at the time of research. (Sugiyono, 2012).[5]

So library research is a research activity carried out by collecting information and data with the help of various materials in the library such as reference books, similar

previous research results, articles, notes, and various journals related to the problem to be solved.

The literature study used in this research is in the form of journals that discuss perceptions and also through previous research.

Data analysis is the most important stage in qualitative research, namely to measure, sort, classify, code or mark, and categorize them, so that a finding is obtained. The following is the flow of data analysis used referring to the theory of Milles and Huberman, namely:

### **3.2. Data Collection**

It is a process that is very necessary when the research is conducted, using a set of references that have been observed to obtain data information through observation, interviews and documentation (Yusuf, Muri). In the process of collecting this data, the researcher conducted an analysis directly in accordance with the data information obtained in the field. [6]

### **3.3. Data Reduction**

Reducing data has the meaning of summarizing and sorting things that have the main idea and then focusing on the things that are important. Data reduction is a form of analysis that clarifies, categorizes, directs, discards unnecessary data, and organizes data so that final conclusions can be concluded and verified.

### **3.4. Presentation of Data**

A collection of information that has been structured and allowed to draw a conclusion and take action. In qualitative research, data presentation can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts and the like (Sugiyono). [7]

### **3.5. Conclusion and Verification**

Thus, the work of collecting data for qualitative research must be accompanied by the work of writing, editing, classifying, reducing and presenting data and drawing conclusions as qualitative data analysis (Yusuf, Muri). [8]

## **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Before conducting interviews with informants, researchers conducted surveys or observations through short questionnaires distributed to respondents. The respondents are active male students who have experience in playing games with female gamers or who have seen female gamers play in online games.

Based on the data that has been collected by researchers through interviews in the field, the researchers can realize that the perceptions of each student are different even though there are some that are the same but most are

different. So, it can be said that students' perceptions of the credibility of female gamers can be seen from the perspective of each of these students

Through the observations of researchers, female gamers are more often required to show their talents/skills more than the way they dress. Through interviews with informants during the current covid-19 pandemic, female gamers mostly use feminine clothes as an attraction to entertain their audience/followers rather than showing their talents/skills in playing games.

Not only that, there are many perceptions from students who emphasize that female gamers must be able to melt the atmosphere in playing a game and their attitude towards the game in order to attract people to watch it or become fans of female gamers.

From the results of interviews with the informants above, if related to the communication theory put forward by Laswell, they are: Who (female gamers), Says What (content/ideas) In Which Channel (platform used by female gamers) To Whom (the audience or followers) With What Effects? (to entertain or provide education and information). So, the result is that female gamers create content/ideas through a platform so that the audience/followers feel the effects of the content/ideas created by the female gamers. The effect can be entertainment or information.

According to the theory of perception, perception is a process carried out by involving the human senses with the aim of compiling, recognizing, and understanding information from sensory to provide an overview and also an understanding of the surrounding environment, perception is divided into several types. Through this research, the types of perception used are visual perception and auditory perception. If it is related to the theory of visual perception, the result is that students perceive female gamers by seeing how they play a game, for example, if the situation in the game is tense, students will see the face/visual of the female gamer showing a serious face. And through this visual perception, students can also perceive that some female gamers use feminine clothes to increase their careers or are just looking for sensation.

Then if it is associated with auditory perception, the results obtained are that:

Students perceive female gamers through their way of carrying out a game. For example, the female gamer talks about funny things when playing games or uses cute voices that make the students like or admire the female gamer's voice.

Furthermore, there is the theory of nonverbal and verbal communication, nonverbal communication is communication whose messages are packaged in a form without words. While verbal communication is communication in the form of spoken or written, an example is the use of words. Verbal communication in the form of words spoken directly (speaking) can be done directly (face to face) or with media intermediaries, for example interacting using social media or cell phones. If it is related to the theory of nonverbal and verbal communication, it can be seen from the results of interviews with informants regarding the informants' views regarding

the professionalism of a female gamer. The results obtained are the way the female gamers carry out a game. nonverbal communication that is done is like giving expression through body language or symbols, for example, if a female gamer wins in the game, she will jump up and down to indicate that she is happy.

In nonverbal communication there is also artifactual communication. If this research is related to artifactual communication, the results obtained: if a female gamer uses revealing or feminine clothes, students will perceive that female gamers are just looking for sensation or doing personal branding so that people like the female gamer. On the other hand, if the female gamer wears closed clothes, students will perceive that this female gamer has good talent/skills so that people are attracted to her because of her professionalism in playing games.

For verbal communication, a female gamer will talk about her situation in playing the game, for example, when she is killed or at the end of the game, the female gamer will trash talk or also say something that shows that she has been killed or has lost the game. Trash talk are words that are spoken but do not have any meaning or nonsense.

Next there is the theory of credibility, Credibility is a set of communication perceptions about the characteristics of communicators. This definition contains several things:

- Credibility is the perception of communicate; so not inherent in the communicator. (Inherent in the Indonesian dictionary means inseparable; attached.)
- Credibility changes depending on the perpetrator's perception (communicate), the topic discussed is the situation.
- Things that affect the communicate perception of the communicator before he communicates are called prior ethos.  
There are several sources of someone obtaining prior ethos including:
  - Direct experience, because this communicator has been well known for a long time so that his personality integrity is known.
  - Vicarious experience, people are attracted because they often hear the name or see the photo of the communicator that often appears in the mass media or on social media
  - Prior ethos because of sponsorship (by sponsorship and endorsement), people are attracted to the communicator because the party (sponsor) who supports the communicator is a high status organization or sponsor who is well known everywhere

This research analyzes the ethos perception of female gamers. For example, through direct experience, the female gamer has the ability because of experience so that the people around her already know the integrity of her personality.

Furthermore, through vicarious experience, people are attracted to this female gamer, if she often appears on social media or people often hear her name and this female gamer has been known for several years in the game world, so this female gamer is credible.

The last one is because of sponsorship and endorsement, people are attracted to female gamers because these female gamers are sponsored by high-status organizations or from well-known brands.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The following are conclusions from students' perceptions of the credibility of a female gamer found, namely:

According to the perception of the informants in this study, a female gamer who streams, then the visual is an important and mandatory thing. not only visual but talent/skill in playing online games is also a measure of the professionalism of a female gamer.

A female gamer must have an attitude in conveying a message when playing a game so that the audience/followers understand the message well

Participating in national and international competitions is a factor or benchmark for someone to judge whether a female gamer is a pro player or not.

A female gamer is also required to join big teams such as E-Sport because if she is alone, it will be difficult to develop both in terms of skills and her career in the online game world.

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