

Descriptive Study of eSports Viewership Motivation of Young Adulthood in Indonesia During The COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Motivation is a force that drives people to think and act. In regard of doing anything, motivation plays an important role in encouraging individuals to act accordingly. In the young adulthood stage, it is one of the most active stage. Through a lot of activities, motivation takes part. While the COVID-19 pandemic takes place, there's a lot of changes happening to the daily activities. One of the biggest changes that is happening and plays a significant part in Indonesia is the eSports industry. Miranda, said the eSports industry, whether in popularity and in revenue keeps growing up. This study aims to get the idea of motivation within watching eSports in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research is a quantitative research, with a non-experimental research. This is a descriptive research. The subjects found in this study consisted of 130 individuals, all within the range of 20 to 28 years old. The results showed that the motivation in eSports viewership got a pretty high average ($M = 5.45$ and $SD = 0.54$). With 4 dimensions boasting a high average, which is drama, physical skill of the athletes, aesthetics, and acquisition of knowledge.

Keywords: motivation, esports viewership, young adulthood

1. INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus pandemic or commonly called COVID-19 continues to this day. López-Cabarcos et al [2] said that, the COVID-19 virus was first identified in December 2019 from Wuhan, China. Then, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. In Indonesia, the first confirmed COVID-19 case was reported on March 2, 2020 [3]. This resulted in a lot of daily activities that had to be postponed or even canceled.

Governments from various countries carry out various ways of prevention, one of which is social distancing. This practice involves creating and maintaining a safe distance between one individual and another and reducing the number of face-to-face interactions with each other [4]. Social distancing promotes staying home and self-isolation, limiting people's freedom to travel, or even exercising [5].

When many people are forced to stay indoors because of the impact of social distancing, then many people shifted to the use of the internet. Miniwatts Marketing Group [6], there are as many as 4.9 billion internet users in the world today. This makes up about 61% of the total population using the internet.

According to Weber [7], there are many reasons to use the internet, such as finding sources of information, communication, entertainment, work, and much more. One of the most common form of entertainment is sports. When

the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, almost all aspects of sports were delayed, many sports were forced to be suspended except for eSports. On the contrary, the eSports field has increased in popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic [8].

According to data from Verizon, telecommunications companies reported a 75% increase in online gaming activity. Platforms for live-streams, such as twitch and YouTube that have been discussed above are also on the rise. Steam, a gaming distributor, reports more than 20 million daily active users, reaching the highest point in its 16-year history [9]. This is also in line with the growth of eSports during the pandemic.

Along with the growth of eSports, the number of eSports viewership continues to grow rapidly. In 2012, the number of eSports viewers reached 134 million, with 76 million casual viewers and 58 million enthusiastic viewers. That number rose dramatically to 395 million viewers in 2018, with 222 million casual viewers and 173 million enthusiastic viewers. This development reaches an increase of 195% [10]. According to Newzoo [11], the number of eSports viewers will continue to grow to 495 million people, with growth reaching 11.7% for 2020.

Behind this growth, there is certainly a motivation that encourages someone to do so, in this case it's the act of watching eSports. Motivation is a process that leads to achieving one goal [12]. There're several factors or

dimensions in Trail and James research about motivation in sports viewership, there are 8-10 subscale used to describe motivation, namely, achievement, aesthetics, drama, escape, acquisition of knowledge, skills from athletes, social interaction, physical attractiveness, aggression, and novelty [13].

During this pandemic, Indonesia is one of the countries that is advancing in the gaming and eSports industry. With various parties starting to enter the industry, researchers are very interested in conducting research related to motivational picture in watching eSports with subjects originating from Indonesia.

1.1. Related Work

Hamari dan Sjöblom, stated that forgiveness can be associated with improved mental health, physical health, self-esteem, well-being, and life satisfaction. escape, acquisition of knowledge, novelty, and aggression are the most encouraging factors in watching eSports. In addition, Hamari and Sjoblom's research also found that aesthetics has no effect in the motivation of watching eSports [14].

1.2. Our Contribution

Drawing from the existing phenomenon, this research was conducted to find what motivates eSports spectators to watch eSports in young adulthood in Indonesia.

1.3. Paper Structure

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses about motivation, esports viewership, result tables and along with the discussion. Section 3 discusses about the conclusion, followed with acknowledgement and references.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Motivation

According to King, Motivation is an impulse that makes people think, act [1]. Darmawati also said that motivation is defined as a stimulus or driver of behavior [15]. A person will exhibit a certain behavior if the behavior can satisfy his wishes or needs. According to Nevid [16], motivation is a process that initiates, guides and maintains a goal-oriented behavior. It is the motivation that causes the individual to act. Therefore, in everyday life, the term motivation is often used to describe why an individual behaves in such a way. Iso-Aloha describes motivation as a pleasant condition and leads to a certain behavior [17].

Trail and James see that there are 8-10 dimensions in the motivation of watching traditional sports [13]. They made a measuring instrument called motivation scale for sports consumption. Another researcher, Hamari and Sjöblom

then made slight changes to the scale so that the dimensions could be adapted into the context of eSports [14]. Inside there are 10 dimensions in watching eSports. *Vicarious Achievement* leads to empathy and togetherness with people or characters in the media, in such eSports with the achievements of the team or its athletes. Therefore, this vicarious achievement has a very strong social component. Because this relates to a feeling of unity with the community, athletes and supported teams. The second dimension, *aesthetics* speaks of the beauty that exists in the sport. Visual elements have proven to be an important motivating factor in watching traditional sports [18]. Aesthetic motivation was also found to have an impact in the context of eSports, streaming games and social media [19][20].

The third dimension is *Drama*. Drama is often associated with uncertainty, or dramatic changes that occur in eSports or the lives of athletes. Many eSports games add random elements that bring up factors of uncertain things [19]. *Escapism* is the fourth dimension. This escapism speaks of a change from a daily routine and into a runaway from daily activities. Hamari and Sjöblom argues that eSports can be a more accessible escape than traditional sports [14].

The fifth dimension, *acquisition of knowledge*, as the name implies, this dimension discusses new knowledge that can be by watching from professional athletes and or large teams. This dimension has proven to be an important factor in video game streaming [21]. The sixth dimension, *player skills*, this dimension is related to the acquisition of knowledge, many individuals who watch eSports, play the game itself. By watching more professional individuals, individuals can experience and appreciate the understanding of the skills possessed by athletes [14].

The seventh dimension, *social interaction* talks about the ability to interact with other audiences or fans. Especially in this modern era, more and more social groups can gather in one place (virtual or not), and can interact with each other [22]. Eighth dimension, *physical attractiveness*. This physical attraction sees the appearance of athletes, or other individuals in the field of eSports. In eSports, one can assume that a person's physical appearance may not be important, however, in almost all large eSports events, it has special cameras for athletes, and the number of interviews on athletes is also very influential [14].

The ninth dimension, *aggressive behavior*, is about the pleasure obtained in witnessing aggressive behavior, such as rage quit, table slam, and others. This is something that almost all gamers have done [23]. The latter dimension, *novelty*. It is talking about something new be it new players, new teams, new competitions or even new games. It is often considered one of the main factors in watching traditional sports [13]. In eSports, there are always new competitors emerging, therefore eSports continues to grow [14].

Trail and James also include family dimension in his first research. But in its application to the eSport context, researchers like Hamari and Sjoblom and many other researchers consider the dimension irrelevant to be accepted in eSports. Motivation theory was also developed by Maslow in King, where humans have five levels or hierarchy of needs, namely 1) physiological need, 2) safety

needs, 3) love and belongingness, 4) esteem, and lastly 5) self-actualization [1].

Another theory from Deci and Ryan in King [1], also discusses motivation from a self-determination point of view. According to them, there are 3 basic needs in the theory of self-determination, namely competence, togetherness (relatedness), and autonomy. Competence speaks when we can bring the results we really want. The motivation here involves self-efficacy and mastery. In togetherness or relatedness. This leads one to build a warm relationship with others. The last need is autonomy. The need for ourselves to be able to control ourselves, so that our behavior is caused by our own self-interest [1].

2.2. eSports and eSports Viewership

According to Hamari and Sjöblom, eSports refers to forms or sports facilitated by electronic systems [14]. Esports can also be interpreted as competitive video gaming. These competitions are often coordinated by various leagues and often eSports athletes have their own teams sponsored by various business organizations. Esports itself is predicted and has been planned to be an event that can produce medals at the 2022 Asian Games in China [24].

Esports, is also defined as a form of sport where the primary aspect of the sport is facilitated with an electronic system [14]. What this statement means is that, in traditional sports, often we as spectators can see the results of such competitions or activities in the "real world", but in eSports these results appear and are visible from the "virtual world". Wagner studies in eSports research based on traditional sports gave the definition of eSports as an area of sporting activity where individuals develop and train their physical ability in using information and communication technologies [25].

James considers eSports to be a competitive gaming competition or the highest competition in gaming. eSports can compete in group or individual form at the highest level [26]. According to Willingham, eSports is an organized video game competition. Competitors from different teams or countries fight to win a video game. Games that belong to the eSports group are generally watched and participated by many million viewers from various regions, either watching live or online. eSports also often works with streaming services such as twitch, YouTube, and this allows each viewer to watch live at the same time [27].

There are several advantages of eSports compared to physical sports, such advantages are a) eSports is a digital phenomenon, b) many job openings, c) fans are not limited by location/venue, d) easy to socialize, e) low risk of injury [10]. In addition, according to Happonen and Minashkina, eSports can provide benefits in physical or psychological health, such as lowering stress, improving vision, hand-eye coordination that even exceeds the sport of table tennis, and many more [28]. Although the chances of becoming a professional eSports athlete are low, the rapid development of eSports continues to open many related job openings such as coaching, analyzing, marketing [29]. There are many benefits in eSports, such as improving attention and

visual acuity, improving decision making and problem-solving skills, and also socialization [30].

Watching eSports matches has so much in common with watching other traditional sports. Most commonly seen from, eSports are often watched via online streaming via the internet, and in addition to watching, fans can also participate and interact with other viewers via chat [14]. Along with the increasing popularity of eSports, of course the audience will also continue to grow. In 2018 alone, the total audience is estimated to reach 380 million people [31]. Online streaming services are also increasing. Total viewers and total broadcasters are also growing. Twitch, the most popular streaming platform among gaming appeared in 2011. Twitch, which from the past until now is still a free streaming service, makes a lot of people watch using this online service [32]. In 2013, twitch users spent over 12 billion minutes on Twitch watching eSports, with League of Legends (LoL) the most popular in July 2020, Twitch scoring 1.4 billion hours used to watch by twitch users [33]. Hamari and Sjöblom's research discusses "What is eSports and Why do people watch it?" they are trying to identify what motivating factors exist in watching eSports. In their research, they used Motivational Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC), a measuring instrument that has been widely accepted by people to measure the motivation of sports spectators with 10 dimensions of motivation above. Hamari and Sjöblom received 888 surveys of respondents from various countries with western cultures [14].

In addition, there is more research from Curley, et al. which is also looking for motivation in the eSports audience, with a more specific competition namely eSports overwatch. Curley et al, chose overwatch because at the time of the research overwatch was one of the most relevant eSports with more than 25 million players [34].

In assessing motivation in eSports, as described in Hamari and Sjöblom's research, there are several benefits in applying MSSC to eSports. Reliability and validity of measuring scale has been tested and proven to have high standards. In addition, the motivational dimensions in the measuring instrument are considered general enough that it can be applied to eSports with little or even no modification.

3. METHODS

The participants of this study are Indonesians in their young adulthood aged 20 – 40 years old and must have at least watched any eSports event once during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gender, ethnicity, occupation and educational background are not limited by the author. Total participants obtained are 130 people. Majority of the participants were male (n=116, 89.2%), with age ranged from 20 to 28. Most of them aged 20 (n=43, 33.0%) and 20 (n=49, 37.3%), with average age 21.45 (*SD*=1.77).

This study used quantitative research with non-experimental method. The type of research used is descriptive, with the aim of figuring out motivation in eSports viewership towards Indonesian young adulthood.

The sampling technique used is purposive sampling. Data was obtained by distributing Google Forms questionnaires online through instant messaging application and social media. This study was conducted in Jakarta, from November to December 2020.

The research instruments consisted of five parts: a cover letter, informed consent, subject's personal data, Motivation Scale for Sports Consumption (MSSC) questionnaire. Another instrument used is the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) 26th to process and analyze research data using Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Independent Sample T Test, and One-Way ANOVA as the data were normally distributed.

MSSC questionnaire is a 32-item questionnaire, with a seven-point Likert scale developed by Trail and James [13] and adapted by Hamari & Sjoblom [14]. It has ten dimensions, namely *vicarious achievements, aesthetics, drama, escape, acquisition of knowledge, physical skills, social interaction, physical attractiveness, aggressive behavior, dan novelty*.

Table 1 showed descriptive statistics of motivation in eSports viewership. Nine out of ten dimensions have an empirical mean score higher than the hypothetical mean score. Thus, the subject's motivations are high. Whereas physical attractiveness, has an empirical mean below the hypothetical mean. This indicates physical attractiveness as a low motivation for eSports viewership.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Motivation in eSports Viewership

Dimension	Hypothetical Mean	Empirical Mean	SD
Vicarious Achievement	4	5.71	1.06
Aesthetics	4	6.07	0.76
Drama	4	6.24	0.89
Escape	4	5.52	0.94
Acquisition of Knowledge	4	6.07	0.92
Physical Skills of the Athlete	4	6.09	0.82
Social Interaction	4	5.44	1.17
Physical Attractiveness	4	3.28	1.51
Enjoyment of Aggression	4	4.72	1.39
Novelty	4	5.35	1.23

Before further analysis, normality testing was carried out using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov One-Sample Test. If the significance score (p) is greater than 0.05, then the data are normally distributed. If the significance score (p) is smaller than 0.05, then the data are not normally distributed. If the significance score (p) is smaller than 0.05, then the data are not normally distributed. On that basis, motivation in eSports viewership has a significance value of $p = 0.983 > 0.05$, meaning that the data is normally distributed.

Independent Sample T-Test was used to further analyze the differences in eSports viewership motivation based on their gender. In general, results show the value of $p = 0.003 < 0.05$, meaning that there are no significant differences in eSports viewership motivation based on gender.

To further analyzing the data, One-Way ANOVA test was used to find the difference in eSports viewership based on age. In general, results shown that the value of $p = 0.454 > 0.05$, hence there are no significant differences in eSports viewership based on age.

The results of this study showed that drama, physical skills of athletes, aesthetics, and acquisition of knowledge are the 4 factors that most encourage an individual to watch eSports. While the performance of the athletes is not a strong encouragement for the People of Indonesia in watching eSports. This shows the difference in Indonesian society with western culture, where from Hamari and Sjoblom's research (2016), escape, acquisition of knowledge, novelty, and aggression are the most encouraging factors in watching eSports. In addition, Hamari and Sjoblom's research (2016), also found that aesthetics has no effect in the motivation of watching eSports.

Even so, the results of the study obtained by researchers found that there are so many factors that support the motivation of watching eSports. This can be seen from 10 dimensions, 9 dimensions namely, vicarious achievement, aesthetics, drama, escape, acquisition of knowledge, physical skill of the athletes, social interaction, enjoyment of aggression, and novelty that get a fairly high average score, and above the hypothetical mean value.

From the results obtained, there are several dimensions that do have a prominent average value. The highest dimension is the dimension that is about drama. This is appropriate and supported from Shaw's research (2013), in which he obtained that entertainment is the most prominent motivation. He found that the dimensions of the play were the second highest dimension of the MSSC. This shows that just like most traditional sports fans, eSports spectators or eSports fans want exciting and unpredictable matches. Research from Karhulahti (2016), also found dramatic changes, which unexpectedly increased viewership.

The second highest dimension is the physical skills of the athlete. Shaw's research (2013), also found that the same dimension of physical skills of the athlete is the highest motivating factor of the MSSC scale. eSports viewers have a desire to see tactics and strategies, as well as the skills of athletes at the highest level.

The third highest dimension is the aesthetics dimension. Research from Shaw (2013) also found a similar thing, where the aesthetics dimension is the highest dimension of the Sports Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS) measuring instrument. Indeed, many video game competitions have a lot of visual media effects, including auditory, such as holograms, which are deliberately designed to bring in more viewers (Webster, 2017).

The fourth highest dimension, is the acquisition of knowledge dimension. In research on media use, knowledge acquisition has been proven to be an important factor in video-game streaming (Hamilton et al., 2014).

The lowest dimension, is the physical attractiveness dimension. Similar to previous research, attractiveness obtained is not a consistent factor in the large number of sports spectators (Meier & Konjer, 2015). It may also be

caused by differences in beauty standards owned by each culture.

In this study, researchers found the existence of some deficiencies or limitations. First, the number of respondents are still limited, as many as 130 people. Second, the study participants lacked of detail. Participants who watch eSports only once are not necessarily motivated to watch; it may be due to curiosity alone. Third, Indonesia has many different cultures. So, it's important to look at cultural differences as well. In this study, it does not describe the motivation of watching eSports per region or cultural differences, thus does not describing the demographic characteristics of Indonesian culture. Fourth, this research took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and the results of this study may be different from the period before or after the pandemic.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on motivational picture in watching eSports, it was obtained that the dimension of drama, physical skill of athlete, aesthetics and acquisition of knowledge are all very high dimension in motivating individuals to watch eSports. The dimensions of vicarious achievement, escape, social interaction and novelty include dimensions that are quite high in motivating individuals to watch eSports, while the dimensions of aggression are in the average range. The research result showed that the lowest dimension is physical attractiveness.

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