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Reports

The Effect of Online Gaming on Children's Mental Abilities: Analyzed from the Maqasid Shariah Perspective (Hifdh al-Aqal)

Kesan Permainan Dalam Talian Terhadap Keupayaan Mental Kanak-kanak Berdasarkan Maqasid Syariah dalam Pemeliharaan Akal (Hifdh al-Aqal)

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Abstract

The evolution of technology has transformed our lives into a new era of connectivity. Experts agree that digital technology has improved life in many dimensions. Therefore, people nowadays depend on technology to communicate, entertain, seek job opportunities, and further their education. Within this digital technology, we have an overwhelming space for entertainment and gaming. Various types of games are accessible through internet connection using smartphones and computers, therefore creating huge business opportunities for IT companies and internet providers. However, despite these technological advantages, experts in psychology and mental health raised their concerns about the negative impact and harm caused by online gaming on mental ability and health. Their special focus in this area of the critic is the gaming gadgets, especially the online games children play at a young age. They based their criticism on some empirical studies showing the negative impact of these online games on the child's mental capability. They stressed that despite the advantages of these, People prefer to leave their outdoor activities only to play with their gadget. From the Shariah perspective, it is pertinent to examine this issue from a maqasidi perspective to assess its possible impact on the objective of Intellect preservation (hifdhu al-aql) in

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particular and the five maqasid necessities (addaruriyat al-khamsah), therefore, decide on its ruling and parameters of use.

Keywords: Maqasid al-Shari'ah, Gaming, Children, Intellect Preservation.

Abstrak

Evolusi teknologi telah memindahkan kehidupan kita ke era baharu ketersambungan. Pakar bersetuju bahawa teknologi digital telah meningkatkan kehidupan dalam banyak dimensi. Perkembangan teknologi seperti ini telah mengubah kehidupan seharian manusia dan menjadikannya lebih mudah berbanding sebelum ini. Oleh itu, manusia pada masa kini bergantung kepada teknologi dalam kehidupan seharian kepada komunikasi, hiburan, pekerjaan, dan Pendidikan Dalam teknologi digital ini, kami mempunyai ruang hiburan dan permainan yang luar biasa. Pelbagai jenis permainan boleh diakses melalui sambungan internet menggunakan telefon pintar dan komputer, oleh itu mewujudkan peluang perniagaan yang besar untuk syarikat IT dan penyedia internet. Walau bagaimanapun, di sebalik kelebihan teknologi ini, pakar dalam psikologi dan kesihatan mental membangkitkan kebimbangan mereka tentang kesan negatif dan kemudaratan yang disebabkan oleh permainan dalam talian keupayaan dan kesihatan mental ini. Tumpuan khusus mereka dalam bidang pengkritik ini ialah gajet permainan, terutamanya permainan dalam talian yang dimainkan oleh kanak-kanak pada usia muda. Mereka mengasaskan pengkritik mereka pada beberapa kajian empirikal yang menunjukkan kesan negatif permainan dalam talian ini terhadap keupayaan mental kanak-kanak. Mereka menegaskan bahawa di sebalik kelebihan ini, orang ramai lebih suka meninggalkan aktiviti luar mereka hanya untuk bermain dengan gajet mereka. Sebelum ini, kanak-kanak bermain dengan rakan-rakan mereka, tetapi hari ini jauh berbeza. Kebanyakan mereka menghabiskan masa mereka untuk permainan video. Malah, beberapa gajet dicipta hanya untuk bermain permainan video. Dari perspektif Syariah, adalah wajar untuk mengkaji isu ini dari perspektif maqasidi untuk menilai kemungkinan kesannya terhadap objektif pemeliharaan Akal (hifdhu al-aql) khususnya dan lima keperluan maqasid (addaruriyat al-khamsah), oleh itu, putuskan ketetapan dan parameter

penggunaannya.

Kata Kunci: Maqasid al-Shari'ah, Judi, Kanak-kanak, Pemeliharaan Akal.

Introduction

This research is motivated by the increasing call to address the issue of online children's games and the scholarly works of experts specialized in children's mental and psychological health on the great negative impact of these online games on children's mental health. Since the Shariah is very concerned with the holistic well-being of humans and established the preservation of intellect (hifdh al-aql) as one of the five necessities (addaruriyat al khamsah) of maqasid; there is an appealing need to undertake an appraisal of online children's games and their impact on the intellect in light of the objective of intellect preservation as promoted by Shariah.

The primary objectives of this research are multifaceted and aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intersection between online gaming and children's mental health within the framework of maqasid al-Shariah. First, the study seeks to define online gaming and explore its various types to establish a clear context. Following this, it will delve into the concept of maqasid al-Shariah, outlining its categories and main characteristics to understand its relevance in contemporary discussions. A significant focus of the research will be to investigate how the use of gadgets, particularly in relation to online gaming, impacts the mental health of children, especially those in elementary school. This investigation will be assessed through the lens of maqasid al-Shariah to evaluate the implications of these effects. Finally, based on the findings, the research aims to propose recommendations that address the negative impacts of online gaming on children's mental health, providing actionable insights for parents, educators, and policymakers.

This research addresses several key questions to guide its

inquiry. Firstly, it seeks to define online gaming and identify its main types. Additionally, the study aims to explore the concept of maqasid al-Shariah, including its primary categories and characteristics. A critical aspect of the research involves investigating whether there are negative effects of online gaming on children's mental health and determining if these negative effects outweigh any positive aspects. Furthermore, the research will examine whether Shariah law addresses the negative impacts associated with online gaming. Lastly, it will consider how maqasid al-Shariah relates to the concept of intellect and the implications this has for online gaming. Through these questions, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between online gaming and children's mental health within the framework of maqasid al-Shariah.

This research has several expected findings and policy implications. The main output of this research would be validated, the maqasidi fundamental of the preservation of intellect (hifz al-Aql) and testing its framework for online gaming. The research is expected to have significant contributions not only to Malaysian concerned institutions and policymakers in addition to presenting a new maqasidi-based approach to address similar complex issues. For the related policymakers, the maqasid fundamental provides a standardized method to address online gaming from a mental health perspective. By utilizing these fundamentals, the concerned policymakers and governmental institutions can gain insights into their mental health performance, and identify areas for ensuring a balanced utilization of online gaming. For the mental health experts especially those from the Islamic fraternity, they will appreciate the comprehensiveness of Shariah and the holistic approach of maqasid in mental health. This will enable them to integrate mqasidi approach in their future scientific investigation. For the Shariah Scholars, the research will widen their approach and analysis of Shariah issues by taking into consideration the time-space factor in proposing a sound and solid solution to Shariah issues.

In summary, the maqasidi approach of addressing online gaming and its impact on mental health has significant potential to empower policymakers, government-linked corporations, NGOs, experts and Shariah scholars in making informed decisions, and enable

policymakers to develop impactful policies.

Problem Statement

Can the objective of Intellect preservation (hifdhu al-aql) be established as the basis for understanding the impact of online games on children's mental health, therefore, establishing a solid ground for the Shariah-ruling for online children's games?

Literature Review

The impact of online games on children's mental health is well-discussed in Western specializedstudies. The study conducted by Julian Von der Heiden et al entitled: "The association between video gaming and psychological functioning" stated that "Drawing on a large sample, our results revealed a medium-sized relation between potentially problematic video game use and poor psychological functioning concerning general psychological symptoms, maladaptive coping strategies, negative affectivity, low self-esteem, and a preference for solitude as well as poor school performance". (Juliane Von der Heiden et al, 2019). Another study of Rau Peng & Yang entitled: "Time distortion for expert and novice online game players". Where they highlighted experts' findings on the impact of online games on children's mental health (Rau Peng & Yang, 2006). Griffiths and Hunt (1998) also pointed out that both parents and professionals believed that children's addiction to video games may disturb their normal learning, cognition, socialization and mental development (Griffiths and Hunt, 1998).

The bad side of this game is its addiction to children. Some countries are facing issues among the children in their country. For instance, what happened in India as stated in an article, "One of India's largest Hindi newspapers declared PUBG an "epidemic" that turned children into "manorogi," or psychopaths. "There are dangerous consequences to this game," the Navbharat Times warned in a March 20 editorial. "Many children have lost their mental balance" (Saritha Rai, 2019).

Thus, this clearly shows that addiction to online games will directly affect children's mental development. This will lead to "gaming

disorder" defined by the World Health Organization in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as a pattern of gaming behaviour ("digital gaming" or "video-gaming") characterized by impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming over other activities to the extent that gamingtakes precedence over other interests and daily activities, and continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences. (WHO, 2018).

This clearly shows that the harmful impact of online games on children's health stressed by theoverwhelming majority of experts and international organisations is a painful reality that needs to be addressed, however, limited studies from the Shariah perspective and a special focus on macro maqasidi Shariah approach have been conducted to address the issue of online games onmental health. This is despite that the fundamentals of Shariah include the objective of the preservation of intellect (Hifdhu al-nafs) establishment of a solid ground to address it.

Based on the above, this research aims to fill the gap in this approach to examine the issue and address its root causes to create awareness and, therefore contribute to its solutions.

The study entitled "An Islamic Perspective on Factors and Behaviors of Adolescent Addiction to Online Gaming" (2019) conducted by Hardiyansyah Masya1 et all concluded that online game addiction is a type of internet addiction disorder. And it is from an Islamic perspective that excessive pleasure, negligence, and following lust result in a lack of attention from the peopleclose to you, stress and depression, lack of control, lack of activity and parenting. The study stressed the importance of guidance and counselling students about the extreme negative impact of online game addiction in adolescents.

Zaki Al Fuad and Helminsyah in their paper "The Impact of Online Games on Social and Cognitive Development on Elementary School Students" (2017).

An article written by Ju-Yu Yen et all in "The International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health" entitled "Emotional Regulation in Young Adults with Internet Gaming

Disorder" (2018) shows that online gaming causes poor emotional regulation leadingto struggle with controlling their emotions, such as anger, sadness, fear, or other emotions. That's because video games are often seen as a way of escaping your emotions. As a result, many gamers, especially young gamers and teenagers, play video games because they may have underlying negative emotions[1].

Few studies are approaching online gaming from the Shariah perspective and out of these studies the maqasidi consideration is almost absent, therefore, examining online gaming from maqasidi perspective is very important in coming up with a holistic analysis of this issue, facilitating solid recommendations to address it.

Research Methodology

The paper adopts qualitative methodology using a comparative analysis of mental health experts' views and their scientific justifications of the positive or negative impact of online gaming on mental health. Muslim scholars' views on the online gaming from maqasid shariah perspective with special reference to the objective of the preservation of intellect (hifdh al-aql) will be referred to. Qualitative documentary analysis will assist in deriving the key maqasidi fundamentals, legal maxims and frameworks will be reviewed in the light of scientific findings. The outcome of this analysis will be basic to propose corrective measures   and propose some parameters and recommendations to address this issue.

The Concept of Online Gaming: An Overview

People choose to play games to have entertainment to fill their free time and release stressafter working or studying. However, the games nowadays are virtual games that include online video games instead of traditional games such as sudoku, chess, carrom and any other games that use physical activities.

An online game is a video game that is either partially or

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[1] Yen, Ju-Yu, Yi-Chun Yeh, Peng-Wei Wang, Tai-Ling Liu, Yun-Yu Chen, and Chih-Hung Ko. 2018. "Emotional Regulation in Young Adults with Internet Gaming Disorder" International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health 15, no. 1: 30. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15010030

primarily played through the Internetor any other computer network available. Online games are ubiquitous on modern gaming platforms, including PCs, consoles and mobile devices, and span many genres, including first-person shooters, strategy games, and massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG)[2]. Since the 2010s, a common trend among online games has been operating games as a service, using monetization schemes such as loot boxes and battle passes as purchasable items atop freely offered games[3]. Unlike purchased retail games, online games have the problem of not being permanently playable, as they require special servers to function.The design of online games can range from simple text-based environments to the incorporation of complex graphics and virtual worlds[4]. The existence of online components within a game can range from being minor features, such as an online leaderboard, to being part of core gameplay, such as directly playing against other players.

A broad definition of online gaming with regards to its means and medium of play includes Internet gaming, web gaming, online gambling, local LAN gaming, and mobile gaming, but not non-networked video and personal computer gaming.

Online games, mean that your opponent or player mate is a video, not a human video game. "Encompasses any kind of computer-based game, whether or not Internet access is required, and they share many characteristics. The most important feature is interactivity, which separates the video game from more passive media such as television, books, and web surfing"[5]. Thus, from this, it shows that online games can be considered as included in the term   of video games but with the requirement to have an internet connection. Besides, smartphones also provide the same video games as their ability is same as computers by

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[2] Quandt, Thorsten; Kröger, Sonja (2014). Multiplayer: The Social Aspects of Digital Gaming. London: Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-82886-4.

[3] Marshall, Cass (November 11, 2019)." The decade when online video games changed everything". Polygon. Retrieved November 11,2019. "How games as a service are changing the way we play". Red Bull. Retrieved September 15, 2020.

[4] Hachman, Mark. "Infographic: A Massive History of Multiplayer Online Gaming". PC Magazine. Retrieved October 6, 2015.

[5] Wallace, P. (2015). The Psychology of Online Gaming. In The Psychology of the Internet (pp. 193-227). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9781139940962.008

providing video games in amini gadget.

Then, year after year, all things faced new developments with more sophistication. Not only in terms of gadgets, it is also happening in video games. The main cause is the Internet which has developed the gaming world into different series and become more advanced. People of all ages were attracted to the wide range of online games. It is because recent video games offer a different range of games such as action games, mind games and sports games. Therefore, people prefer to choose virtual games over reality games because their features bring enjoyment and satisfaction. Consequently, problems occur when video games attract young kids to play. They just play any kind of game they want at any time. As we know, young kids are like a sponge as they can easily absorb or imitate what they see and experience. Without parental control on them when playing video games, it will cause addiction to them until it changes their life and even affects their mental abilities.

Types of Online Games[6]

Online games can be divided based on three considerations:

1- The first one is based on types of interactions, where we have player versus environment (PvE). It is a term used in online games, particularly MMORPGs and other role-playing video games, to refer to fighting computer-controlled opponents. On the other hand, we have player versus player (PvP), the term used to describe anygame, or aspect of a game, where players compete against each other rather than against computer-controlled opponents.

- The second consideration is based on a specific category of games related to similar gameplay characteristics. The following is a list of the most commonly defined video game genres, with short descriptions for individual genres and major subgenres. For instance, we have action games that

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[6] See on the types of online gaming, https://www.polygon.com/features/2019/11/11/20947872/decade-in-review -online-games-as-a-service

emphasize physical challenges that require hand-eye coordination and motor skills to overcome, platform games (or platformers) have gameplay primarily centred around jumping and climbing to navigate the player's environment, shooter games where players use ranged weapons to participate in the action, which takes place at a distance, fighting games centre around close-ranged combat, typically one-on-one fights or against a small number of equally powerful opponents, often involving violent and exaggerated unarmed attacks, survival games start the player off with minimal resources, in a hostile, open-world environment, and require them to collect resources, craft tools, weapons, and shelter to survive as long as possible. Other games in this category include puzzle games, physics games and beyond.

2- The third consideration with regards to the specific game entered into. In this category, we have a number of globally famous games that attract the majority of online game players such as:

- **First-person shooter game (FPS)**, an expansion of hero shooters, a sub-genre of shooter games, happened in 2016 when several developers released or announced their hero shooter multiplayer online game. Hero shooters have been considered to have strong potential as an export, as a large degree of skill and coordination arises from the importance of teamwork. Some notable examples include Battleborn, Overwatch, Paladins and Valorant[7].

- **Real-time strategy game (RTS)** that allows multiplayer play over a modem or local network thanks to the growth. By the late 1990s, most RTS games had native Internet support, allowing players from all over the globe to play with each other. Popular RTS games with online communities have included Age of Empires, Sins of a Solar Empire, StarCraft and Warhammer 40,000: Dawn of War.

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[7] Wawro, Alex (May 6, 2016). "Hero Shooters: Charting the (re)birth of a genre". Gamasutra. Retrieved May 6, 2016.none

- **Massively multiplayer online games (MMO)** were made possible with the growth of broadband Internet access in many developed countries, using the Internet to allow hundreds of thousands of players to play the same game together. Many different styles of massively multiplayer games are available, such as MMORPG (Massively multiplayer online role-playing game)MMORTS (Massively multiplayer online real-time strategy), MMOFPS (Massively multiplayer online first-person shooter),MMOSG (Massively multiplayer online social game), Multiplayer online battle arena game (MOBA)

- **Battle Royale games** are a genre that blends the survival, exploration and scavenging elements of a survival game with last-man-standing gameplay. Dozens to hundreds of players are involved in each match, with the winner being the last player or team alive. Some notable examples include Player Unknown's Battlegrounds, Fortnite Battle Royale, Apex Legends, and Call of Duty: Warzone, each having received tens of millions of players within months of their releases. The genre is designed exclusively for multiplayer gameplay over the Internet.

The Growth of Online Gaming

The global online gaming market size was estimated at USD 204.63 billion in 2022 and is expected to attain around USD 440.89 billion by 2032, growing at a CAGR of 7.97% from 2023 to 2032. The U.S. dominated the North American region in 2022.

North America held the largest revenue share in 2022. Asia-Pacific is expected to expand at the fastest CAGR from 2023 to 2032. By Game Type, the action & adventure games segmentheld the maximum revenue share in 2022. By Platform, the mobile segment is expected to expand at a significant CAGR from 2023 to 2032[8].[8]

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[8] https://www.precedenceresearch.com/online-gaming-market#:~:text=The%20global%20online%20gaming%20market,7.97%25%20from%202023%20to%202032.
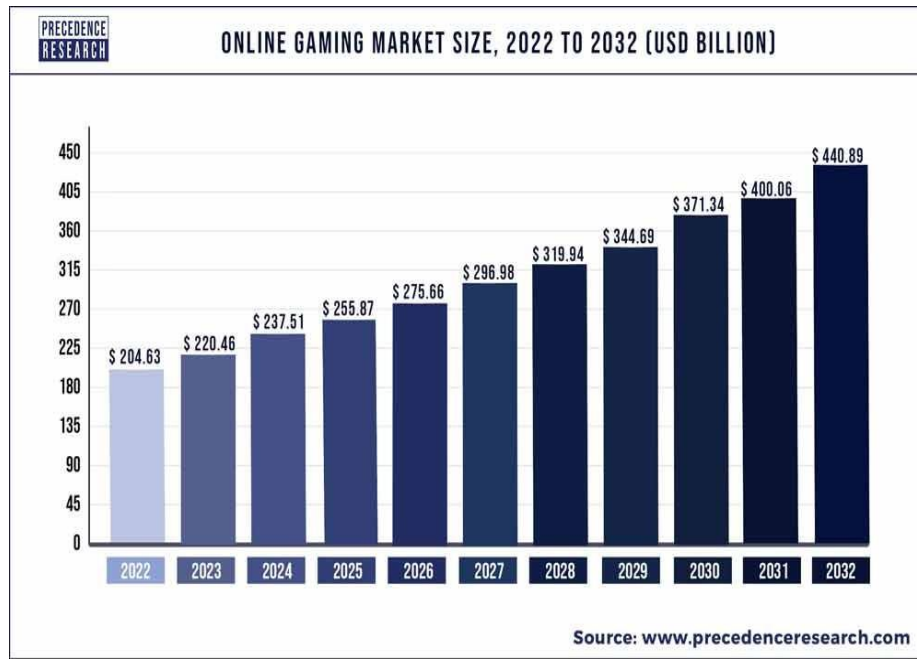
The Concept of Maqasid Al-Shariah

Muslim scholars stressed that the ultimate objective of maqasid al-Shariah is to serve the interests (jalb al-masaliḥ) of all human beings and to save them from harm (dafʿ al-mafasid), Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111) in reflecting this fundamentally defined maqasid by stressing the Shariah's concern with safeguarding five objectives by stating that: The very objective of the Shariah is to promote the well-being of the people, which lies in safeguarding their faith(din), their lives (nafs), their intellect (aql), their posterity (nasl), and their wealth (mal).Whatever ensures the safeguarding of these five serves the public interest and is desirable, andwhatever hurts them is against the public interest and its removal is desirable.

Ibn ʿĀshūr (1973), on the other hand, defines maqasid from a broader dimension. He stated: The all-purpose principle (maqs.ad amm) of Islamic legislation is to preserve the social orderof the community and ensure its healthy progress by promoting the well-being and righteousness (salah) of the human being. The well-being and virtue of

human beings consist   of the soundness of their intellects and the righteousness of their deeds, as well as the goodnessof the things of the world where they live that are put at their disposal.

The uppermost objectives of the Shariah rest within the concept of compassion and guidance,which seeks to establish justice, eliminate prejudice and alleviate hardship. ʿAllāl al-Fāsī (d. 1974) stresses these elements in his definition, which states:

> "The overall objective of Islamic law is to populate and civilize the earth and preserve the order   of peaceful coexistence therein; to ensure the earth's ongoing well-being and usefulness through the piety of those who have been placed there as God's vicegerents; to ensure that people conduct themselves justly, with moral probity and with integrity in thought and action,and that they reform that which needs reform on earth, tap its resources, and plan for the goodof all".

By understanding these definitions, it promotes cooperation and mutual support within the family and society at large. This is manifested in the realisation of Maslahah (public interest) which the Islamic scholars have generally considered to be the all-pervasive value and objective of the Shariah and is synonymous with compassion. Maslahah sometimes connotes the same meaning as maqasid and the scholars have used the two terms almost interchange-ably.7 To further shed light on our discussion of the objectives of the Shariah, especially concerning their application in the preservation of public interest,the following section elaborates on the principles of maṣlaḥah, serving as an important tool touphold the Shariah.

Categories of Maqasid al-Shariah

After conducting a thorough induction (istiqra') of the detailed evidence and meanings of Shariah, scholars such as Juwaini, Ghazali and Shatibi classified maslahah into three main categories, namely darurriyat (necessities), hajiyyat (exigencies) and tahsiniyyat (embellishments). In assessing the Ideal Ratings ESG model, the main focus is on the five necessities and how far they are observed in the KPIs and Inputs.

The necessities are benefits (masalih), also called maqasid, and are deemed by Shariah as absolute requirements for the survival and spiritual well-being of individuals, to the extent that their destruction or collapse would precipitate chaos and the demise of the normal order in society. The necessities are five in number, namely the protection of religion (din), nafs (self),'aql (intellect), nasl (progeny) and mal (wealth). They are briefly defined as follows:

a. Din: Din refers to the Islamic religion that embodies teachings of ritual acts ('ibadat)ethics (akhlaq) and dealings (mu'amalat). Din can be protected in two ways:

1. Rules that establish din such as the application of Islamic financial transactions in banking, insurance and capital markets.

2. Rules that protect din from harm such as the prohibition to defame Islam or undermineits tenets in any way.

b. Nafs: Nafs refers to human beings regardless of their religion, race and social status. Nafscan be protected in two ways:

1. Rules that make nafs exists such as the permission of marriage and the obligation to take healthy food only.

2. Rules that protect nafs from harm such as the permission to take haram food undernecessity, the prohibition of killing or harming an innocent human being and committing suicide.

c. Aql: Aql refers to the faculty of human thinking. In Islam, aql is protected in two ways:

1. Rules that help the aql function in the proper way such as

education, training,systematic reasoning and critical thinking.

2. Rules that protect the aql from any kind of harm such as consuming wine, taking drugs and falling prey to deviated ideologies.

d. Nasl: Nasl refers to the continuity of human life through the process ofreproduction. In Islam nasl is protected in two ways:

1. Rules that guarantee the existence of nasl such as marriage.

2. Rules that protect a person from being harmed such as arbitrary birth control thataims to stop new births and the prohibition of adultery and homosexuality.

e. Mal: Mal refers to any valuable asset whether monetary or in kind. It also includes physical things such as the environment and economic development. In Islam, mal is protected in two ways:

1. Rules that establish mal such as trade and economic development in terms of wealth mobilization

2. Rules that protect mal from loss such as the prohibition of stealing, fraud and cheating.

3. Hajiyyah (need or complementary) are interests that supplement the essential interests. It refers to interests whose neglect leads to hardship but not to total disruption of the normal order of life. In other words, these interests, other thanthe five essentials, are needed to alleviate hardship, so that life may be free from distress and predicament. It also acts as provisions that aim at removing hardships and/or facilitating life. An example is seen in the sphere ofeconomic transactions where the Shariah validated certain contracts such as the

salam sale and also that of lease and hire (ijārah) because of the people's need forthem, notwithstanding a certain anomaly that is attendant in both.

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5. Tahsiniyyah (embellishments). The embellishments refer to interests whose realisation leads to refinement and perfection in the customs and conduct of people at all levels of achievement. For example, the Shariah encourages charity tothose in need beyond the level of the obligatory zakāh. In customary matters and relations among people, the Shariah encourages gentleness, pleasant speech and manner, and fair dealing. Other examples include permission to use beautiful, comfortable things; to eat delicious food; wear fine clothing and so on.

6. With regard to the relationship between daruriyyah, hajiyyah, and tahsiniyyah, al-Shāṭibī and other scholars stressed the following:

   • Ḍaruriyyah are fundamental to ḥajiyyah and taḥsiniyyah.

   • Deficiency in daruriyyah brings deficiency to hajiyyah and tahsiniyyah in an

   immutable manner.

   • Deficiency in hajiyyah and tahsiniyyah does not necessarily affect daruriyyah.

   • An absolute deficiency in hajiyyah and tahsiniyyah may bring deficiency to

   some extent in daruriyyah.

   • To keep up hajiyyah and tahsiniyyah for the proper maintenance of daruriyyah is desirable.

      • The second category of maqasid is the specific objectives of Islamic legislation (al-maqasid al-

khāṣṣah), where the area of concern is a specific discipline, such as Islamic transactions or family law or private conduct. Ibn ʿĀshūr states that the specific objectives:

- Consist of the methods (kayfiyyāt) intended by the lawgiver for realising the useful purposes of human beings or preserving their public interests related to their private conduct. The aim here is to prevent people's pursuit of their interests from leading to the undermining of their established public interests, owing to carelessness, whimsical errors, and vain desires.

- Notwithstanding the demarcation made by the scholars between general and specific objectives, the two remain interrelated. There is much overlapping and integration between general and specific objectives of the Shariah. Hence, to treat any of the objectives as discrete would be rather naïve. Both categories thereby serve as a main framework governing human lives in this world to achieve ultimate happiness in the hereafter.

Characteristics of Maqasid al-Shariah

Maqasid al-Shariah has four main characteristics: The first is that they are the basis of legislation, as legislation has to serve the interests of all human beings (jalb al-maṣāliḥ) andsave them from harm (dafʿ al-mafāsid). Scholars argued that identification of this characteristic is based on an inductive reading (istiqrāʾ) of the texts of the Qurʾān and the Sunnah. Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 1350) says:

The Shariah is based on wisdom and achieving people's welfare in this life and in the hereafter. The Shariah is all about justice, mercy, wisdom, and good. Thus, any ruling that replaces justice with injustice, mercy with its opposite, common good with mischief, or wisdom with nonsense, is a ruling that does not belong to the Shariah even if it is claimed tobe so according to some interpretations.11

The second characteristic is that maqasid al-Shariah is universal, aiming to serve the interestsof mankind and requiring the adherence of all human beings. This is because it is the last revelation, applicable to the whole of mankind everywhere on earth until the end of this world. The supporting evidence is so abundant in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah that it amounts to a thematic recurrence (tawātur maʿnawī). For example, Allah says, "Now [as for you, O Muḥammad,] We have not sent you except to mankind at large" (34:28); "Say [O Muḥammad]: 'O mankind, verily, I am an apostle to all of you'" (7:15812).

The third characteristic is that maqasid al-Shariah is inclusive (absolute). It encompasses allhuman acts whether they are related to ʿibādah (responsibilities to God) or mu'amalah (responsibilities concerning another human being). Imām al-Shāfiʿī (d. 820) stated in his al-Risālah that:

> No misfortune will ever descend upon any of the followers of God's religion for which there is no guidance in the book of God to indicate the right way, for God, Blessed and Most high,said: "a Book we have sent down to you that you may bring forth mankind from darkness to light, by the permission of their lord, to the path of the almighty, the Praiseworthy" [15:1–2]and he said: and we sent down to you the Book as a clarification for everything and as a guidance and a mercy and good tidings to the Muslims" [16:89].13

The fourth characteristic of maqasid al-Shariah is that they are definitive, i.e. it has not beenderived from one text or evidence, but from a multiplicity of texts and different aspects of evidences. Clear indications of this characteristic can be found in the usual maxims such as: "Acts are judged by intentions" and "Where there is a definitive text, there is no room for interpretation", as well as in fiqhi maxims such as "[The right to] gain comes with responsibility [for loss]" and "Necessity renders prohibited things permissible".

Maqasid Al-Shariah and the Preservation of Intellect

Al-ʿAql or the intellect is a great gift from Allah s.w.t. to mankind. This is one of the human capacities that differentiate man

from animals. Allah s.w.t. has ordered that everyone should protect this precious gift by utilising the mind for the benefit of all and not for any kind of evil or anything that might lead to destruction. He prepared him for success on the earth and for populating it with goodness andrighteousness by His bounty over all other creatures.

Allah the Almighty blessed man by endowing him with Intellect, and he honoured him with it in an eloquent manner, making him the source of assignment and responsibility, and by virtueof His bounty over all other beings in preference, He prepared him to succeed in the earth and to populate it with righteousness and goodness.

Islam has given great importance to the intellect. This is because the word (Aql) was mentioned in the Holy Qur'an about forty-nine times, with its multiple linguistic inflections (Aqalouh, ta'qiluh, taeqiluna, na'qil, ta'qiluha, ta'qilun). And if we add to the previous number the word (al-albab), which was mentioned about twenty-six times, and the word (qalb) and its various derivatives, which amount to about a hundred and twelve times, we will obtain a Qur'anic view of the intellect and what is related to it, its significant cognitive importance. Islam's care with regards to the preservation of the intellect, is usually referred to by the prohibition of alcohol and the legislation of the deterrent punishment for consuming intoxicants. However, a significant aspect of Islam's care for intellect transcends beyond thisaspect to include:

1- Making reason the precursor to faith

2- Calling for faith by scientific reasoning and not accepting anything except what isaccepted by Shariah, reason or reality

3- Rejection of taqlid imitation and the call for ijtihad and the implementation of thoughtand reason

4- Directing the intellect to stay away from useless issues or have no way to realize theirtruth

5- The liberation of man from superstition and nonsense[9].

The Prophet also encouraged Muslims to practice Ijtihaad (independent reasoning) in resolving various issues that arose in the Muslim Ummah.54 The Prophet (p.b.u.h) is reported to have said in a Hadith narrated by 'A'mer If a ruler makes an ijtihad and he is precise in it, he will be rewarded with two rewards, if, however, he makes a mistake, he will be rewarded with one reward. This is because the protection of the intellect requires safeguarding it from anything that might harm the ability and functions of the intellect.

Al-Najar gave a new maqasidi dimension to the preservation of intellect. He articulated his idea by highlighting the types of this maqasidi preservation which is divided into two types ofpreservation:

The physical preservation by facilitating factors of growth and strength such as food, clothingand physical exercise, or by warding off factors of weakness such as illnesses, and bad nutrition is summarised in the famous proverb that says "A sound mind is in a sound body".

The intangible preservation of the intellect where the Muslim jurists when addressing maqasid did not give full attention to this type of intellect preservation, as most of their interestfocused on it is the material preservation, confining it in most to representation by the prohibition of alcohol. Even though the one who examines the rulings of Sharia and itsruling, as they are mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah, finds many rulings and rulings that aim to preserve the intellect morally, whether by facilitating the causes of its strength or repelling the causes of its weakness, which is a facilitation or repulsion for reasons of a moral character. He then divided this intangible preservation of intellect into:

- The preservation of the intellect through liberating the thought

- The preservation of the intellect through assimilative learning.

- The preservation of the intellect through thought learning

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[9] Al-Najar, Abd al-Majid, (2004) Maqasid al-Shariah in new Dimension, p124

-   The preservation of the intellect through systematic learning[10]

Do online Games harm Children's Mental Abilities?

Video games are the best way to gain entertainment in modern societies. Even nowadays people make lots of money only by playing online games. It became a trend by playing online games and at the same time making online streaming so that all people can watch them.

The examination of the effect of online games on children's mental health and ability has its proponents and opponents.

The Proponents of Online Gaming

Online gaming proponents argue that based on several research studies, online gaming mayboost children's learning, health and social skills. The studies highlighted the following positive effects of online gaming[11]:

- It may strengthen a range of cognitive skills such as spatial navigation, reasoning, memoryand perception.

- It may help children develop problem-solving skills, as the more adolescents reportedplaying strategic video games, such as role-playing games, the more they improved in problem solving and school grades the following year, according to a long-term study published in 2013.

- It may enhance children's creativity by playing any kind of video game, including violentgames, but not when children use other forms of technology, such as a computer or cell phone, other research has revealed.

- It can improve players' moods, promote relaxation and ward off anxiety, especially byplaying simple games that are easy to access and can be played quickly, such as "Angry Birds."

- It can help us learn resilience in the face of failure. By learning to

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[10] Ibid, p54

[11] https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2013/11/video-games

cope with ongoing failures in games, children build emotional resilience they can rely upon in their everydaylives.

- People who play video games, even if they are violent, that encourage cooperation are morelikely to be helpful to others while gaming than those who play the same games competitively, as more than 70 percent of gamers play with a friend and millions ofpeople worldwide participate in massive virtual worlds through video games such as "Farmville" and "World of Warcraft." Therefore, multiplayer games become virtual socialcommunities, where decisions need to be made quickly about whom to trust or reject and how to lead a group.

The research emphasized that educators are redesigning classroom experiences, and integrating video games. This can shift the way the next generation of teachers and students approach learning. Likewise, physicians have begun using video games to motivate patients to improve their health. Researchers supporting this view recommend that teams of psychologists, clinicians and game designers work together to develop approaches to mental health care. These approaches integrate video game play with traditional therapy.

The Opponents of online gaming

The widely held view maintains that online games make people intellectually lazy and present a danger to children's mental health. important research has already been conducted for decades on the negative effects of gaming, including addiction, depression and aggression, therefore considering Online Games as dangerous entertainment. They highlighted numerous negative effects amongst them:

- Causing game addiction, so that players become completely absorbed in gameplay and continue to play

- Children's addiction to video games may disturb their normal learning, cognition, socialization, and mental development"

- There is *a medium-sized relation between potentially problematic video game use and poor psychological functioning with regard to general psychological symptoms, maladaptive coping strategies,*

negative affectivity, low self-esteem, and a preference for solitude as well as poor school performance.

- It affects children's education and personal growth as children will not focus when theyare attending school since they have made up their minds to play computer games whenthey get back.

  In addition to the above, a Harvard study highlighted several negative onlinegaming, among them:

- Gaming injuries, that involve repetitive stress injuries, or overuse injuries, are injuries that come from activities that involve repeated use of muscles and tendons, to the pointthat pain and inflammation develop.

- Obesity in teens and, plausibly, the same would be shown in adults, if studied. This is due to the obvious phenomenon that if a teen is sitting in front of a screen for hours every day,he or she isn't getting much exercise. Obesity is also thought to be due to increased food intake while playing video games.

- Vision problems are common complaints of gamers. The most common vision problemis eye strain, which can lead to headaches and poor concentration. Gaming has been reported to result in seizures, leading to warnings on the packaging.

- Gaming addiction which has also been associated with psychological problems. It is a unique syndrome. According to the American Psychological Association, IGD is defined as experiencing at least five of the following nine criteria over 12 months:

  ● gaming preoccupation

  ● withdrawal

  ● tolerance

  ● loss of interest in other activities

• downplaying use

• loss of relationship, educational, or career opportunities

• gaming to escape or relieve anxiety, guilt, or other negative mood states

• failure to control

• continued gaming despite psychosocial problems.

- Gaming has also been associated with sleep deprivation, insomnia and circadian rhythmdisorders, depression, aggression, and anxiety.

- The exposure to the extreme violence that is commonly found in video games can desensitize teens and young adults to such violence, causing emotional problems and even leading to young people committing acts of violence.

The bad side of this game is its addiction to children. Some countries are facing this issue among the children in their country. For instance, what happened in India as stated in an article, "*One of India's largest Hindi newspapers declared PUBG an "epidemic" that turned children into "manorogi," or psychopaths. "There are dangerous consequences tothis game," the Navbharat Times warned in a March 20 editorial. "Many children have lost their mental balance"11*. The addiction to online gaming will result in a gaming disorder. According to World Health Organization, "Gaming disorder is defined in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as a pattern of gaming behaviour ("digital- gaming"or"video-gaming") characterized by impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming over other activities to the extent that gaming takes precedence over other interests and daily activities, and continuation or escalation ofgaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences. This shows that addiction to online games is not normal anymore as it influences children.

Hence, this issue is getting worse todays. The addiction on online games will change the children's mind into negatives which result to

inappropriate behaviour. Parents need to do something to ensure their children are growing in a good surrounding with good thought.

Conclusion

This research shows that the issue of the effect of playing online games is now becoming an issue of concern around the world. Some countries are starting to worry about their future generation since online games have changed the lives and perspectives of the youth. Some countries have taken proactive measures by banning some of the online games that lead to violence. Besides, the effectof online games on children's mental abilities is a big issue since they are still young, and they are the ones who will determine the future of the country. The impact is that it will affect their growth process due to the influence of online games.

With regards to Maqasid Shariah, As stated before, the preservation of Aqal is essential in Islam.This means that when there are negative things that can affect the preservation of Aqal or prevent it from reaching its balanced level of mental thinking and emotion, it must be prevented. Playing online games is permissible in Islam provided they are played in a balanced and moderate manner, and they do not lead to haram such as cause harmful to the body and mental health such as addiction.

Awareness and education are essential elements to protect children from falling into the trap of   online gaming. Young people should be encouraged to live a healthy lifestyle that includes plenty of sleep, exercise, and good nutrition, rather than being sucked into the vicious circle of online gaming.

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