

## IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATIONAL GAMES BASED ON ROLE PLAYING GAMES (RPG) AS A LEARNING MEDIA FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION

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**Abstract:** The escalating issue of demoralization within the younger generation in Indonesia is exacerbated by the diminishing character values, often attributed to the pervasive influence of globalization. Recognizing the inadequacy of character education in schools, there is a pressing need for more engaging and interactive approaches to instill character in the youth. One promising avenue is leveraging games, given the prevalent engagement of young people in this activity. Among the various game genres, role-playing games (RPGs) stand out as particularly popular. This study, utilizing a literature review research method with descriptive analysis, aims to elucidate the implementation of RPG-based educational games as a medium for character education in the younger generation. The literature study findings underscore the potential of RPGs to serve as effective character education tools for adolescents, stimulating essential aspects such as ethical thinking, moral reasoning, value systems, friendship, self-scaffolding, and metacognition.

**Keywords:** Game Education, Role Playing Game, Character Education

**Abstrak:** Permasalahan demoralisasi pada generasi muda kian marak terjadi di Indonesia. Hal ini terjadi karena mulai lunturnya nilai-nilai karakter pada diri generasi muda yang diperparah dengan pengaruh globalisasi. Pendidikan karakter di sekolah dinilai kurang cukup sehingga diperlukan pendekatan lain yang lebih menarik dan interaktif dalam penanaman karakter pada generasi muda. Salah satu cara yang dapat digunakan adalah dengan menggunakan game. Kini banyak generasi muda yang menghabiskan waktunya untuk bermain game sehingga game dapat digunakan sebagai media pendidikan karakter yang efektif. Salah satu genre game yang populer saat ini adalah role-playing game (RPG). Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi game edukasi berbasis RPG sebagai media pembelajaran pendidikan karakter bagi generasi muda. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian studi pustaka dengan analisis deskriptif. Hasil studi pustaka yang dilakukan menunjukkan bahwa role-playing game (RPG) dapat dijadikan media pendidikan karakter pada generasi muda karena role-playing game (RPG) mampu menstimulasi beberapa hal penting dalam pendidikan karakter, seperti pemikiran etis, penalaran moral, sistem nilai, friendship, self-scaffolding, dan metakognitif.

**Kata Kunci:** Game Edukasi, Role Playing Game, Pendidikan Karakter.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Character education is a pedagogical process aimed at cultivating ethical and moral values in individual students, facilitating the development of a robust sense of identity and integrity. The primary objective is to enable students to internalize and apply these values in their daily lives as active and engaged members of society, exhibiting qualities such as religiosity, patriotism, productivity, and creativity (Abidin, 2012). The foundational principles and objectives of education, as outlined in the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Sisdiknas), emphasize the role of education in shaping the character and civilization of a dignified nation. According to Article 3 of the law, national education functions to nurture students' potential, molding them into individuals who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, possessing noble character, health, knowledge, independence, and a sense of democratic and responsible citizenship. This legal framework serves as a fundamental reference in the development of character education, particularly for the younger generation.

According to the 2020 Population Census data, Indonesia's population stood at 270.20 million people in September 2020, with a significant demographic presence of Generation Z and millennials dominating

the majority (BPS, 2021). As these two generations, currently in their productive years, hold the potential to shape Indonesia's socio-economic landscape over the next 10 to 20 years, this demographic scenario is commonly termed a demographic bonus. Projections indicate that by 2030-2040, the productive population is anticipated to constitute 64 percent of the total population, reaching an estimated 297 million people (Afandi, 2017). In anticipation of this pivotal demographic shift, comprehensive preparations are imperative, particularly in the cultivation of the nation's character, to foster a cadre of skilled and principled human resources.

Upon closer examination, the attainment of a demographic bonus in Indonesia is confronted with formidable challenges, exacerbated by the unabated and unstoppable flow of information in the era of globalization (Fitriani & Dewi, 2021). These challenges encompass issues such as the ongoing scrutiny of nationalism and pluralism, a character crisis, a dearth of role models, global upheavals, social dilemmas, intensifying and stringent competition, and the adverse repercussions of globalization, which are gradually eroding the nation's character (Budiwibowo, 2016). Consequently, the pervasive decline in the character of the nation's generations is an unsurprising

phenomenon, attributable to the profound influence of globalization.

Drawing from 2018 data, KPAI observed a concerning peak in the incidence of children in conflict with the law (ABH), tallying 1,434 cases, with a considerable number of them confined to the Special Children's Correctional Institution (LPKA). The offenses leading to such legal entanglements ranged from theft, drug abuse, immoral activities, sexual violence, bullying, and, alarmingly, cases of homicide (PUSLITDATIN, 2019). This troubling trend is indicative of a widespread erosion of individual character values among the youth. Addressing the issue of demoralization within the younger generation emerges as a critical imperative, with character education identified as a viable avenue for intervention.

Character education constitutes an educational approach dedicated to molding individual character by instilling moral and ethical values, with discernible outcomes reflected in the daily behavior of individuals. Commencing at an early age, the implementation of character education should align with the child's stage of growth and development, necessitating a supportive environment from both family and school settings (Ainissyifa, 2014). Character encompasses three interconnected elements: moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral behavior. The

cultivation of good character hinges on habituating the mind, heart, and behavior, as emphasized (Ramdhani, 2014). Character education serves as a conduit for children to employ their moral knowledge, contributing to the enhancement of their behavior in daily life, as underscored (Mutmainah & Dewi, 2021).

While character education has long been integrated into Indonesia's national education curriculum, its emphasis has heightened in the 2013 Curriculum, aiming to shape students into more courteous individuals by instilling values (Hidayat, 2021). Despite these efforts, the prevalent character crisis among the nation's generation persists, indicating a need for additional approaches beyond the existing education system. Recognizing the limitations of the current system, it is imperative to explore alternative methods to enhance character education. One promising avenue involves employing more engaging and interactive media to resonate with the younger generation. Utilizing technology, particularly game media, emerges as a viable strategy to make character education more compelling and accessible (Kresna, 2013).

Over the past two decades, the rapid evolution of digital gaming, commonly referred to as gaming, has garnered substantial attention and has transcended its traditional role as mere entertainment.

Contemporary games have evolved into effective learning tools, contributing significantly to the formation of moral values and character development. Despite this, societal perceptions of games remain predominantly negative, largely influenced by the belief that games primarily exert adverse effects on children, promoting idleness. This bias stems from the prevalent popularity of games designed solely for entertainment, leading to concerns about children prioritizing gaming over academic pursuits. Consequently, it is crucial to reposition games as an educational medium, recognizing their potential to offer positive and constructive experiences (Putra, 2019).

Games exert a dual influence on children, encompassing both negative and positive impacts. The positive facets of gaming (Fithri & Setiawan, 2017), involve fostering technological literacy, instilling rule adherence, refining problem-solving and logical capabilities, honing spatial and motor skills, and providing a source of entertainment. Particularly noteworthy is the role of games in enhancing reasoning and logic skills, as games often present challenges requiring problem-solving strategies to attain predetermined objectives. This necessitates the application of logical reasoning, indirectly sharpening children's cognitive abilities and mental acuity (Agata, 2015).

Games, a form of multimedia, can seamlessly integrate with learning, commonly referred to as educational games (Rahayu & Fujiati, 2018). Educational games represent a learning medium that adeptly combines elements of learning and play, fostering heightened interest and motivation in children to engage in educational pursuits (Panjaitan et al., 2020). Vitianingsih (2016) posits that educational games, structured with a simulation model, exemplify real-world situations, facilitating knowledge acquisition through the successful completion of challenges. Rahayu & Fujiati (2018) further elaborate that educational games distinguish themselves by providing learning through practical application, adopting a "learning by doing" approach that stands in contrast to traditional learning methods. This active and effective learning model (Robani et al., 2021), encourages children to engage in learning actively, ultimately enhancing their educational outcomes.

The Role-Playing Game (RPG), currently surging in popularity, is a sought-after genre, particularly in Indonesia, as indicated by the 2015 Indonesian Game Industry Map, where RPGs rank among the most favored alongside First Person Shooter (FPS) or war/shooting games (Kemkominfo, 2016). The allure of RPGs lies in their ability to immerse players deeply, fostering a desire for continued

engagement through the creation of a dynamic, lifelike environment within the game, allowing players to embody and infuse personality into their characters (Kresna, 2013).

In the RPG genre, players assume specific roles and undertake missions or tasks within the game's storyline, affording them the freedom to navigate their characters and make decisions within the established rules (Kresna, 2013). Leveraging compelling narratives, practical challenges, interactive features, and immediate feedback, RPGs exhibit the capacity to cultivate robust intrinsic motivation, stimulate cognitive and collaborative learning, and foster critical thinking among players (Sourmelis et al., 2017). Consequently, Role-Playing Games (RPGs) are frequently employed in cognitive learning and skill development pertinent to complex, real-world scenarios (Hauge et al., 2012).

The immersive environment of Role-Playing Games (RPGs) has been identified as a catalyst for reducing social distance among players, fostering heightened open communication and dialogue between participants (Terlutter & Capella, 2013). Beyond digital gaming for entertainment, RPG applications extend their utility to realms beyond, being incorporated into leadership training activities (Giritli et al., 2013) and

environmental resource management training (Choy et al., 2011; Ducrot et al., 2015). Consequently, the primary objective of this research is to elucidate the utilization of RPG-based educational games as a strategic means for delivering character education learning specifically tailored for the younger generation.

## **METHOD**

The method of this study was used literature study method, while this research involves an approach dedicated to collecting information from various previous studies and relevant written sources (Sugiyono, 2005). A database search for articles was conducted using search media such as Google, Google Scholar, ProQuest, ScienceDirect, and Taylor and Francis, the library study method systematically locates literature sources pertinent to the research topic.

Following a comprehensive search across diverse sources, five articles aligning with the established criteria were identified and subsequently analyzed. These criteria encompassed the focus on research articles about the role of Role-Playing Games (RPGs) and similar genres, with a specific emphasis on the younger generation, and publication within the 2013-2023 timeframe. The chosen articles underwent scrutiny through descriptive analysis, a method that entails presenting and

elucidating acquired data without the intent of hypothesis testing or generalization (Sugiyono, 2007).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Implementation of RPG-Based Educational Games as A Medium for Character Education

Numerous educational games based on Role-Playing Games (RPGs) have emerged as pivotal tools for character education. The subsequent section presents research findings associated with the utilization and impact of RPG-based educational games in the context of character education for players.

**Tabel 1. Objectives**

Author	Objective
<b>Wright et al., 2020</b>	Examine the utilization and impact of imaginative role-play games in fostering positive moral reasoning development among young adults.
<b>Schrier, 2017</b>	This research aims to investigate the ethical decision-making processes of male players during gameplay and to explore design principles that hold the potential for implementation in game development as a means of fostering ethical development.
<b>Wang &amp; Yu, 2017</b>	Examining the relationship between the value systems adhered to by players and their behavior when playing

	Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG).. The informants were 3 teenagers with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and aged between 16-21 years
<b>Gallup et al., 2016</b>	Investigated the social experiences and perceptions of friendship among three adolescents with ASD who engaged in online video game play in the context of a Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG).
<b>Monem, 2015</b>	This research seeks to explore the ways in which Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG) contribute to enhancing metacognition and self-scaffolding among teenage male gamers

**Tabel 2. Result**

Author	Result
<b>Wright et al., 2020</b>	The findings of this study indicate that imaginative RPG games serve as a medium for cultivating moral reasoning in players. Moreover, player interactions within the group context give rise to shared ethical scenarios that promote moral decision-making, fostering moral dilemma situations where players prioritize collective interests over personal considerations.
<b>Schrier, 2017</b>	The research findings underscore that RPG games can effectively serve as a learning medium to

cultivate players' ethical thinking skills, encompassing perspective-taking, reflection, information gathering, and empathy. Moreover, the study reveals that players' cognitive skills evolve in response to in-game scenarios, as they engage in decision-making practices that extend beyond individual choices to contribute to group decisions. Consequently, educators can employ RPG games as a valuable learning method, enabling students to hone their ethical thinking, reflect on choices, and engage in group discussions to explore alternative answers.

**Wang & Yu, 2017**

The research findings demonstrate that gaming skills are transferrable to real-world applications in everyday life, with in-game values such as responsibility, friendship, peer pressure, cultural background, and past experiences effectively contributing to players' personal development. The presence of a reinforcement system within the game encourages players to repetitively engage in behaviors aligned with these values.

**Gallup et al., 2016**

The findings of this research highlight that Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG) facilitate individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in forming friendships, comprehending in-game roles, and discerning virtual emotions. The acquired knowledge in virtual environments aids

individuals with ASD in comprehending and rationalizing social communication strategies, thereby supporting direct interactions in their daily lives. Additionally, individuals with ASD develop an understanding of the distinctions in rules between the virtual world and real-life settings.

**Monem, 2015**

The study reveals that individuals frequently engage in silent inner speech while playing games to self-direct during gameplay. Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG), with their interactive, multi-sensor, multi-modal features and captivating graphics, effectively stimulate individual metacognitive functions. Metacognition, encompassing self-awareness, self-scaffolding, and self-confidence, plays a crucial role during gaming experiences. Additionally, the anonymity provided by MMORPGs motivates individuals to persist in learning and overcoming in-game challenges.

Among the selected five articles, three employ a quantitative approach, while the remaining two adopt a qualitative methodology. Notably, the majority of the research is conducted in European countries, with only one study originating from an Asian country. The research instruments utilized across these studies encompassed questionnaire surveys and

interview processes. Questionnaire instruments included assessments of attitudes during gameplay (Attitude Game Survey), moral reasoning (DTI-2), value orientation (SUI Test), and value systems (Culture View). Conversely, interviews focused on exploring experiences and perceptions of friendship, game perceptions, self-scaffolding, and metacognition. Collectively, the articles investigate topics such as ethical thinking, moral reasoning, value systems, friendship, self-scaffolding, and metacognition, with all six closely aligned with the realm of character education.

Based on the findings extracted from the five articles, it is evident that Role Playing Games (RPGs) can prompt ethical considerations among players. Ethical thinking, in this context, involves contemplating the emotions and perspectives of fellow players, adhering to in-game rules, and prioritizing collective viewpoints during team decision-making (Schrier, 2017). Notably, after scrutinizing games with specific ethical scenarios, it was revealed that there is no discernible distinction between these and general Role-Playing Games (RPG) (Schrier, 2017). Furthermore, engagement with RPGs fosters empathy among players (Schrier, 2017). The stimulation of ethical thinking during RPG gameplay holds the potential to

enhance the overall ethical mindset of Role-Playing Game (RPG) players.

### **Moral Reasoning**

Additional findings highlight that engagement in Role-Playing Games (RPG) prompts players to engage in moral reasoning, stemming from the emergence of moral dilemmas within the gaming context. These dilemmas manifest through various elements in video games, such as religious authority, denial of responsibility, and degradation of humanity (Wright et al., 2020). The presence of moral dilemmas results in Role-Playing Game (RPG) players assigning a lower personal interest value compared to group interest values (Wright et al., 2020). Notably, those with elevated group interest values experience a sense of togetherness, equality, and unity during RPG gameplay (Wang & Yu, 2017). Furthermore, participation in Role-Playing Games (RPG) can heighten players' desire for achievement, as they are tasked with completing specific quests or missions, consequently elevating their achievement scores (Wang & Yu, 2017).

### **Metacognition and Self-scaffolding**

Engaging in Role-Playing Games (RPG) prompts players to engage in silent inner speech, facilitating self-regulation during gameplay (Monem, 2015). The manifestation of silent inner speech in



RPGs contributes to the development of self-awareness, self-scaffolding, and self-confidence, integral components of individual metacognition (Monem, 2015). These findings elucidate that RPG gameplay stimulates players' metacognitive abilities, fostering enhanced self-management skills as players become more adept at utilizing their metacognition. Moreover, in subjects with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), participation in Role-Playing Games (RPG) not only aids in comprehending the concept of friendship but also facilitates social interaction, offering an alternative to face-to-face interactions (Gallup et al., 2016).

### **Implementation of Young Generation Characters**

Participation in Role-Playing Games (RPG) yields positive outcomes for players, fostering enhanced ethical thinking, moral reasoning, and metacognition. Ethical thinking within RPGs encompasses the considerations of others' emotions, comprehension of diverse perspectives, and prioritization of teamwork in decision-making processes. Thus, RPG games function as a valuable training ground for ethical thinking, ultimately enhancing the moral feelings, moral knowledge, and moral behavior of

players, particularly the youth in the context of this research.

Ethical thinking, as cultivated through Role-Playing Games (RPG), correlates with the acquisition of crucial soft skills essential for navigating diverse situations in daily life. Proficiency in understanding others' emotions fosters an empathetic attitude in individuals. Additionally, the capability to comprehend different perspectives nurtures critical thinking skills as individuals analyze in-game scenarios. Consequently, individuals are adept at problem-solving and devising solutions to accomplish missions within the game, with these acquired soft skills indirectly preparing them to navigate challenges in the external world.

Role-Playing Games (RPGs) introduce moral dilemmas, resulting in a prioritization of group interests over personal ones, cultivating sentiments of togetherness and unity, commonly known as social connectedness. This phenomenon correlates with the development of social skills, wherein individuals acquire the ability to collaborate with groups and foster flexible thinking by relinquishing personal inclinations to achieve collective objectives. Particularly in individuals with *Autism Spectrum Disorder* (ASD), RPGs play a pivotal role in enhancing

comprehension of friendship's significance and facilitating social interactions.

Moreover, Role-Playing Games (RPGs) foster metacognition by promoting silent inner speech, elevating self-awareness, and enhancing self-confidence. Proficient metacognition is indicative of strong literacy skills, influencing an individual's interest in learning and self-understanding. As elucidated earlier, this RPG game is instrumental in boosting players' motivation to achieve as they strive to fulfill in-game missions.

In essence, Role-Playing Games (RPGs) provide a platform for young individuals to instill values of togetherness and intellectual improvement, aligning with the principles of Pancasila, the foundational ideology of the Indonesian nation, particularly in its 2nd and 3rd principles. The overall impact of RPG gameplay is a positive contribution to ethical development, moral reasoning, and cognitive skills, positioning RPG games as a direct avenue for character education tailored to the contemporary youth. Consequently, RPG games emerge as a viable means of implementing character education within the National Education System (Sisdiknas), in harmony with the normative values of Pancasila.

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, the discourse establishes that engaging in Role-Playing Games (RPG) can serve as an effective medium for character education in the younger generation. The immersive nature of RPGs stimulates critical elements of character education, including ethical thinking, moral reasoning, value systems, friendship, self-scaffolding, and metacognition. Hence, the recommendation is made to incorporate Role-Playing Games (RPGs) as a medium for character education to enhance the effectiveness and enjoyment of the teaching process. Moreover, this approach is not limited to the general younger population but extends inclusively to individuals with special needs.

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