

**Phenomenological Study Of Interpersonal Communication Among Online Game
Players In The Indonesian Pubg Mobile Discord Community**

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Article History

Received : June 2025
Revised : June 2025
Accepted : July 2025
Published : July 2025

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Cite This Article:

Al Hilal , M. Z., Sari, D., Harmadi, A., Utami, S. R., & Novianti , R. (2025). Phenomenological Study Of Interpersonal Communication Among Online Game Players In The Indonesian Pubg Mobile Discord Community. *Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin*, 4(04), 57–61.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.56127/jukim.v4i04.2168>

Abstract: The phenomenon of online gaming has become an interesting aspect in Indonesian society, especially among Generation Z. Various groups and communities have formed around online games, with a special focus on PUBG Mobile. This study aims to uncover interpersonal communication patterns in the social interactions of online gamers in the Indonesian PUBG Mobile Discord community. By analyzing through the lens of symbolic interaction theory, this study adopts a qualitative method. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation conducted with several key informants, in order to obtain relevant facts regarding the problems studied. The results of this study significantly indicate that social interaction and interpersonal communication in the context of this community go beyond the simple coordination function in the game. Both play a fundamental role as important elements in the formation and maintenance of strong social relationships among community members. The main motivation behind the behavior of social interaction and interpersonal communication between members is a deep desire to keep up to date with the latest developments in the PUBG Mobile game they play. The presence of personal and situational motivations collectively makes this community a conducive place, where good and mutually supportive relationships can be built and maintained among its members. This study highlights the multifaceted role of communication in online gaming communities, emphasizing its importance in fostering social cohesion, sharing interests, and creating a supportive environment for players.

Keywords: Interpersonal Communication; Players; Online Games; Community; PUBG

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of online gaming has become an integral part of society, bringing significant changes to the way individuals communicate and interact. In particular, games like PUBG Mobile and online communication platforms such as Discord have created a unique ecosystem where interpersonal communication plays a central role in shaping the social interactions of game players. The advancement of technology and online games has altered communication patterns, opening new spaces for the exploration of identity, norms, and values that develop in the virtual world. Game players interact not only through the actions of virtual characters but also through the symbols embedded in the game and communication platforms like Discord. Furthermore, this phenomenon holds significant social relevance amid the rise of an increasingly dominant online gaming culture. Virtual communities serve as a reflection of social transformation, where virtual identities not only represent players as individuals but also as members of a community that shares common norms and values.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method, which is employed to describe and summarize various conditions experienced by the research subjects. This method involves observation, interviews, and documentation of several informants who were randomly selected from the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Discord community, serving as a means of gathering information to obtain the necessary data for the problem being studied.

According to Sugiyono (2021), qualitative research is a method based on post-positivist philosophy, commonly used to study natural object conditions, where the researcher acts as the key instrument and describes a situation objectively or based on observable facts. Qualitative descriptive research aims to portray, describe, explain, and answer the research problems in greater detail by studying an individual, a group, or an event as thoroughly as possible. This method is carried out by collecting and reviewing literature and other sources related to the research topic. In this case, literature study involves finding sources through books, the internet, journals, and other materials considered relevant and supportive of the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The mind refers to the internalization of the social communication process that emerges during individual interactions. The diversity of backgrounds among members of the PUBG Mobile Indonesia community influences the use of symbols and specific terms. This diversity may include differences in language and culture, which can affect how symbols and unique terms are used within the community.

Members of the PUBG Mobile Indonesia community use various languages and dialects that reflect their geographical diversity. This can influence the usage and understanding of regional terms or slang in conversations. Local cultures—such as traditions and culturally specific references—are often reflected in the symbols and terms used by community members during interactions.

Special symbols or terms frequently used during interactions within the PUBG Mobile Discord community may lead to the adoption of a distinct language style among members. This creates a unique communication pattern and may even influence how they interact outside of the community. The use of these symbols and specific terms can affect how members interact with each other, especially when individuals interpret or receive symbolic messages differently.

Table 1. Specific terms & meanings of terms used

No	Special Term	Meaning (English)
1	Winner – Winner Chicken Dinner	Used to refer to a victory in the game
2	Drop	Location where players land
3	Loot	Items found and collected by players
4	Circle	Play area that gradually shrinks over time
5	Blue Zone	Represents the boundary of the shrinking play area
6	Red Zone	Marks dangerous zones
7	TPP and FPP	Terms used for game modes (Third-Person / First-Person View)
8	Camp / Camping	Strategy where players stay in one place
9	Push	Action to attack or approach the enemy
10	Watch Out!	Warns teammates when there is an enemy ahead

Source: Author Data

It can be found that the use of special terms in online games facilitates communication among players. A shared understanding of these terms allows players to communicate more quickly and effectively. The use of special terms can increase player engagement in conversations and discussions within the community. For example, players may use the term “push” to indicate that they are attacking the enemy together. Players feel more involved when they can participate in conversations using commonly understood terms. It is important for community members to understand the symbols and special terms frequently used in the game, as this can enhance communication and interaction among players.

Self-Concept in the Interaction Among Members of the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Discord Community
Self-concept refers to an individual's ability to understand themselves through interactions with others. Players can form their self-concepts through their actions, words, and participation in various community activities.

Based on an interview with one of the informants, Ryan Triandika, it can be explained that a person's attitude in social interactions can have a significant impact on shaping the self-concept of others. A person's attitude can serve as a behavioral model for others. If individuals display positive attitudes and ethics in social interactions, it can become an example for others to adopt similar behaviors. This can influence how individuals form views about themselves. Through social interaction, one can gain a better understanding of oneself.

Another informant, Muhammad Fikri, stated that the positive or negative attitudes we display can affect the extent to which a person feels accepted or rejected in a social environment. The responses and feedback we receive from others can influence our self-concept. A positive attitude in social interactions can result in positive feedback, which in turn strengthens a person's positive self-concept. When someone is kind, friendly, and supportive, others may feel more accepted, which can enhance their confidence and self-concept. Other people's perspectives can help individuals develop a better understanding of their own strengths, weaknesses, and personal values.

The positive or negative attitudes shown by individuals can influence how accepted or rejected they feel within a social environment. The responses and feedback they receive from others can impact their self-concept. A positive attitude can generate positive feedback, reinforcing a person's positive self-concept. When someone behaves kindly, warmly, and supportively, others are more likely to feel welcomed, increasing their self-confidence and self-understanding. The perspectives of others can help them better comprehend their own strengths, weaknesses, and values.

Based on the discussion above, self-concept in Herbert Mead's symbolic interaction theory can be understood as a social construction that develops through processes of reflection, interpretation of symbols, and social interactions with others. Self-concept is not static, but rather dynamic and continues to evolve as individuals gain more social experiences.

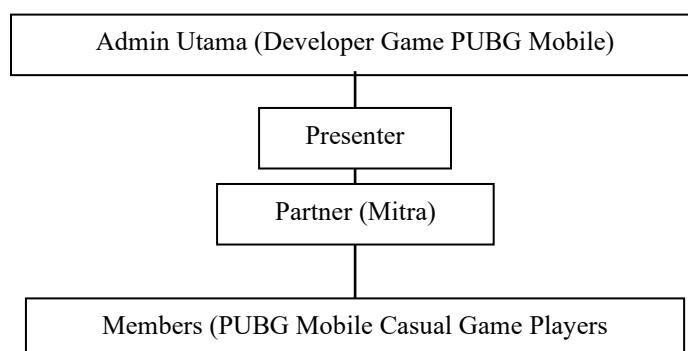
Society in the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Discord Community

Society is defined as a network of social relationships that shape human beings. An individual becomes involved in society through behaviors they actively and voluntarily choose. In this case, society refers to the members of the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Discord community. This community has its own norms and ethics that regulate the behavior of its members.

The society within the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Discord community has the power to influence the behavior of its members. For example, if the community actively promotes tolerance and mutual support among members, it may foster positive behavior within the group. Conversely, if the community reinforces toxic or aggressive behavior, it can lead to negative interactions among its members. It is important for community members to understand the impact of the attitudes and behaviors they promote. If the main goal is to create a friendly and inclusive virtual community, then efforts should focus on strengthening values such as cooperation, mutual respect, and empathy.

The structure of society within the PUBG Mobile Discord community can be seen in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Community Structure in the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Community



Source: Author Data

Based on the table above, there are four social structures within the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Discord community, which will be explained in the following discussion:

Main Admin (PUBG Mobile Game Developer, Tencent Games)

Tencent Games is the entity responsible for managing and developing the PUBG Mobile game in Indonesia. The main admin holds the highest authority within the community and has full access to Discord's administrative features and tools. The main admin is responsible for organizing events, updating information related to the game, and handling technical issues that may arise.

Moderator

Moderators are members appointed to oversee the behavior and activities of other members within the Discord community. They are responsible for enforcing rules, moderating chats, and managing conflicts between members. Moderators typically have the authority to issue sanctions to those who violate the rules, such as issuing warnings or even revoking access to certain server features.

Partner

A partner is an individual or entity that has a partnership relationship with the PUBG Mobile Indonesia community. Partners may be sponsors, content providers, or have other forms of involvement that benefit the community. Partners usually have special access and privileges within the community, such as receiving promotions or other perks. Examples of partners include content creators, brands, and influencers.

Member

Members serve as players, readers, viewers, or contributors to various discussions and activities held within the server. They are expected to follow the rules set by the admins and moderators and contribute positively to maintaining a pleasant and friendly community atmosphere.

These community members are not merely passive observers, but also active participants who create shared meaning through their interpersonal interactions. Understanding the norms and values that emerge through this communication provides rich insight into how this virtual society plays a central role in shaping the social experiences of online game players within the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Discord community.

CONCLUSION

Interpersonal communication within the PUBG Mobile Indonesia Discord community is not solely focused on exchanging information about the game; it also involves the use of unique symbols that serve as a shared language among players. By understanding these symbols, individuals within the community can construct shared meanings, form strong social bonds, and develop a collective identity that reinforces a sense of solidarity among them. These symbols can be identified not only as tools for communication but also as mediums for the formation of individual and group identity.

The process of creating shared meaning involves the interpretation of symbols within the context of the game and the community's culture. The emergence of social bonds proves that interpersonal communication in the online gaming world goes beyond mere virtual interaction—it has real impacts on relationships beyond the platform.

Thus, this study contributes to our understanding of how interpersonal communication and symbolic interaction play a role in shaping social reality within online gaming communities.

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