

# **THE RISE AND IMPACT OF ONLINE GAMING ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF LEARNING PERCEPTIONS AND STUDENTS' PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES**



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# The Rise and Impact of Online Gaming on Academic Performance: a Systematic Analysis of Learning Perceptions and Students' Phenomenological Experiences

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## Abstract

This in-depth study asks students how they view about how online video game play impacts their schoolwork. Through indepth talks with fifteen students, the study finds critical themes about how online games can be used to avoid or put off doing work, how they can help people connect, and how hard it is to keep track of time. Small games can be good for your brain and help you meet new people, but playing too much can hurt your grades, make you put things off, and make you feel stressed. Students say they must be balanced and self-disciplined so games do not hinder their schoolwork. The study shows how important it is for students to learn how to organize their time, have teachers and parents help them, and have support networks to deal with the complicated relationship between homework and games. These new thoughts help us understand the two effects of online games and help us think of better ways to teach about them in school. *Keywords: Online Gaming, Academic Performance, Learning Perceptions, Experiences*

## INTRODUCTION

Online games have become so famous that they are being talked about worldwide. This is important to students all over the world. This growth is due to better digital technologies that make games more fun and easy to get to. The gaming business is a big part of the culture and the economy. Millions of people play games on many devices and types of games, but many people fear how it might affect their schoolwork, especially young adults (Alzahrani & Griffiths, 2024). It becomes essential to consider both the good and bad effects of online games, especially regarding school. One study by Abou Naaj and Nachouki (2021) that looked at the effects of being addicted to online games found that college students who were hooked on games did worse in school. Alzahrani and Griffiths (2024) also did a complete study on problematic gaming and found that game addiction is often tied to poor academic success and mental health issues.

A study in the Philippines in 2023 by Berenguel et al. also found that students who play too many online games are less likely to pay attention in class. This proves that game addiction is a problem worldwide, not just in some places. Studies done in the Philippines and nearby places back up these global results even more. According to Cabrillos et al. (2023) and Gabrito et al. (2023), students can enjoy video games, but it can be hard to keep up with their schoolwork if they are not appropriately watched.

Despite more and more research on the subject, we still need to learn about the exact situations in which online games can help or hurt students' grades. Two studies (Cabrillos et al., 2023; Dumrique & Castillo, 2018) looked at the harmful effects of playing video games too much. Another study (Zubiri & Tomacruz, 2014) looked at the possible cognitive benefits of playing games in moderation, such as solving problems and doing more than one thing at once. However, there needs to be more in-depth research on how students think and feel about these changes at school.

This study must add to the talk about how internet games affect school. This is even more true now that the COVID-19 plague is over and people increasingly depend on technology. Educators and parents need to know how gaming affects students' schoolwork because more and more students spend time online for school and fun (Bird et al., 2020; Wilson et al., 2024).

## Research Objectives

To find out what students think about how playing video games online affects their schoolwork.

To find out what students think and how they act with others when they play video games online.

To see how well students can balance their schoolwork and game responsibilities.

## Problem Statement

Online gaming today raises important questions regarding its impact on academic performance of students. While some research show negative academic consequences linked to excessive gaming, the link is currently being investigated, particularly in relation to moderate gaming and its prospective cognitive benefits.

## Research Questions

This research seeks to elucidate these mechanisms so that guidelines may be developed to enable children to engage in better video game play.

How do students believe their online gaming influences their course of study?

When students consider their experiences with internet gaming, what type of cognitive skills come to mind?

How can students manage their passion for internet gaming with their schoolwork?

## Literature Review

### Online gaming worldwide

Online gaming has spread worldwide and is enjoyed by millions of people from all walks of life. As video games become more popular, researchers are looking into how they affect education, especially how well students do in school (Kiuchi, 2024). Concerns have been raised about the long-term effects of Filipino children's excessive gaming, which is linked to lousy school performance. The complicated connections between gaming, cognitive ability, and school success have yet to be well known, even though there is evidence that too much gaming is bad (Dumrique & Castillo, 2018), but it may also help with brain development (Zubiri & Tomacruz, 2014). Knowing about these connections improves the places where students learn and have fun. Hayes et al. (2024) say cyberpsychology games help people connect and form groups. International culture also affects how gamers act. Canesi et al. (2024) say that e-sports players are affected by where they live, the type of game they play, and their age and gender. Their numbers show that gender, age, and location can change how popular a game is and how many people play it. The studies by Kiuchi (2024), Hayes et al. (2024), Brown et al. (2024), and Canesi et al. (2024) help us understand the complicated world of online games by giving us a straightforward way to examine these changes.

Many teens and young adults play video games online, which could hurt their grades (Cabrillo et al., 2023; Dumrique & Castillo (2018; Verrecio, 2018). Researching what makes people more likely to become addicted to online games, Reyes (2020) found that too much gaming, being alone a lot, and doing poorly in school were all risk factors. Delos Santos et al. (2020) found that mobile games made students less good at school in many places worldwide. Addiction to video games leads to more stress and disinterest in schoolwork, which is terrible for mental health and success (Labana et al., 2020). Aside from addiction, gaming may take the place of schoolwork and study (Gabrito et al., 2023).

After doing much study, Manandhar and Timala (2023) found that regular gaming hurts all students' academic success, no matter their class. Abou Naaj and Nachouki (2021) found that college students who played online games while studying from home did poorly in school because the games made it hard to tell the difference between fun and studying. Playing games online in a balanced way may help you solve problems and do more than one thing at once, which may help you do better in school (Zubiri & Tomacruz, 2014). Even though it is not addicting, playing games in moderation might have neutral or sound effects in some situations.

### The Impact of Screen Time and Sleep Deprivation on Health

Screen time has become ubiquitous in modern life, particularly among children and adolescents.. PeralSuárez et al. (2024) investigated lifestyle clusters involving diet quality, sleep, and screen time among children in Madrid. According to Vieira et al. (2024), children's sleep habits were significantly disrupted when they stayed more on computers which pushes back bedtimes. Trujillo et al. (2024) proposed to use technology to identify those who sleep insufficiently and indicate when they will likely do it. Murad and Jamaluddin's (2024) findings highlight how crucial it is to enable children to perform better by improving the sleeping conditions of their schools. Two key strategies for addressing these problems and reducing the harmful consequences of contemporary living are limiting time spent on computers and promoting excellent sleep habits.

Supporting what we already know, Halim et al. (2024) further demonstrate that improved sleep is linked to improved brain function. When they slept more, they could better recall and reason through challenges. Researchers Cojocar et al. (2024) and Halim et al.

(2024) found that children who struggle with sleep do poorly in school, and their brain function suffers. This indicates the need for sleep for brain health. Too much video game playing might compromise your mental health and cause difficulty remembering and thinking (Alzahrani & Griffiths, 2024). Liu et al. (2024) claimed that children who spend too much time on electronic media—including games—may struggle to regulate their emotions and behave appropriately in social situations. They may also find it more challenging to address difficulties and apply critical thinking.

### Benefits and drawbacks for gaming players

Many individuals believe that internet games are only for entertainment value. For those who play them, however, they are also crucial for their social and professional life. Boldi (2024) claims that these internet sites enable individuals to learn how to be leaders, get to know one another, and cooperate. In personal and professional spheres, this may be helpful.

Games affect things other than relationships. They also affect children's mental health and well-being. Investigating what occurs when children use digital media like games beyond midnight, LedererHutsteiner et al. (2024) found teenagers and young adults who play video games late at night are more likely to develop symptoms of depression and anxiety, which aggravates insomnia. For instance, their moods are less consistent, and they experience more fear and stress. Playing video games too much and too late at night might induce anger and mood swings that make it difficult to manage everyday life and do well in school (Shermatov, 2022).

Wearable technologies and health surveys let Trujillo et al. (2024) ascertain long-term sleep deprivation. According to their investigations, one might track and project individuals who sleep poorly with technology. This offers essential data on how evolving situations affect health over time. Murad and Jamaluddin's (2024) case study claims that sleep deprivation substantially influences the students' classroom performance, resulting in lower grades and less efficient brain function. Too much time spent before a screen causes difficulty sleeping, according to PeralSuárez et al. (2024) and Vieira et al. (2024).

### Effects of insufficient sleep on academic performance in schools

It is commonly known that school performance suffers depending on sleeping quality. Studies have repeatedly demonstrated, for example, how fluctuations in sleep

may make it more difficult for children to perform generally. Regular sleep issues were linked to worse academic performance and more difficulty forming friendships among students than among those who slept well. These conclusions are supported by Halim et al. (2024), who also show that improved sleep quality is associated with improved brain function. However, Internet games have specific issues that diminish their social advantages. Like non-fungible tokens (NFTs), Zaucha (2024) also explores how digital markets and platform capitalism alter the realm of online gaming. More than mere relationships, games affect mental health and well-being, particularly in teenagers, and influence Lederer-Hutsteiner et al. (2024) investigate how children's usage of digital media, including games, after midnight alters the relationship between being hooked to the internet and not being able to sleep.

Cariaga et al.'s (2024) new study shows that teaching students 21st-century skills like creativity, critical thought, communication, and teamwork can help them do better in school. This fits with a worldwide trend in education (Cariaga, 2024) that says kids need to learn how to deal with challenging situations and adapt to a world that changes quickly. Moreover, the 2024 study of parental narratives by Cariaga, Sabidalas, Cariaga, and Dagunan shows the need for family engagement and school assistance in determining academic and social-emotional results. This supports the view that student success depends totally on parental involvement. Particularly in settings where students need more help, IT (information and communication technology) tools and creative techniques for teaching arithmetic have been shown to improve education in rural areas (Cariaga et al., 2023; Cariaga & Halaissi, 2024; Halaissi et al., 2023). These results underscore the need for creative solutions, including culturally sensitive education, to manage problems in local and global educational systems. This corpus of studies advances an all-around approach to education involving skill development, parental input, and flexible teaching tactics to help children perform better.

### Methodology

#### Design of Research

Semi-structured conversations took place in person and over videoconferencing. Each lasted thirty to forty-five minutes, which was long enough to explore the participants' stories and points of view entirely. A qualitative research method was used to understand better how students felt about playing video games online and how that affected their schoolwork.

## Data Analysis

Transcriptions of the conversations were analyzed using theme analysis. Several rounds of coding helped find themes that led to patterns and new ideas about the study problems.

## Ethical Considerations

Each participant in the study signed a form saying they understood what was happening and could quit without consequences. Making participant data anonymous and keeping records safely helped protect privacy.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A thematic analysis of how playing video games online affects how well students do in school. Several studies examined the link between playing video games online and doing well in school, which was used to make this theme analysis. Four significant topics repeatedly appear in the document: the academic consequences of gaming, its cognitive and behavioral effects, its psychosocial implications, and how to balance gaming with personal and academic duties.

### 1. How playing video games online affects schoolwork

A critical idea in the study is that too many online games can make it harder to do well in school. Every year, research from all over the world and the US shows that students who play video games online too much do worse in school. One study from the Philippines (Cabrillo et al., 2023) found a strong link between college students who did poorly in school and those who played video games too much. Also, Alzahrani and Griffiths (2024) said that people who are addicted to video games often have trouble in school and with their mental health. Students are putting off learning and projects they need to do for school because they want to play video games instead. This could be one reason why the marks are going down. Two studies by Dumrique and Castillo (2018) and Gabrito et al. (2023) back this up. They found that students addicted to video games are bad at handling their time and forget to do things like go to school. Many people addicted to video games do not care about school, which shows that gaming can hurt schoolwork if it is not managed.

Gaming in moderation can be good for your brain. The study by Zubiri and Tomacruz (2014) shows that playing online games in moderation can boost cognitive

skills like teamwork and problem-solving, which could be helpful in school. These studies show that playing computer games in moderation might help students learn, but only if they do not get hooked completely. However, these brain benefits do not always hold, and if you play video games too much, you might lose any benefits that are there.

### 2. How playing games online changes your mind and behavior

Playing games is good for your brain. Several studies have examined whether playing games online is good for your brain. Zubiri and Tomacruz (2014) found that playing video games in balance makes you more brilliant at thinking strategically and spatially. You can use these skills in school to solve math and science questions. Online games that require you to work with others and think critically have also been linked to better brain functioning, which means you can focus and remember things better.

However, the significance of these brain benefits will depend on how much time you spend on games. Alzahrani and Griffiths (2024) say that too much video game play can hurt your brain in many ways, such as making it harder to concentrate and remember things. When these things happen, it can be challenging to do well in school. This shows that games can affect a student's brain in two ways, depending on how they use it in real life. It is a common theme that being hooked on video games can lead to losing your mind. Studies like those by Gabrito et al. (2023) and Dumrique and Castillo (2018) show that students hooked on video games lose the ability to think and reason over time. People with this loss of cognitive skills have trouble focusing, are less interested in learning, and have trouble with complex tasks. These findings show that the fact that video games are addicting makes problems in school and with thinking more severe. This is especially true when students play games instead of doing useful things like learning.

### 3. The mental and social effects of playing games online

Studies have found that internet games have two sides to their social effects: they can bring people together and push them away from each other. Both Hayes et al. (2024) and Canesi et al. (2024) say that playing online games can help bring people together because they let them meet new people and work on projects together. Some students feel like they belong and make friends in these game groups. The groups also teach them how to



lead and work with others. These social factors benefit students who may have trouble getting along with others. Other studies, however, show that too much video game play can make people less interested in other people and less social. According to a study by Dumrique and Castillo (2018), people who play video games too much avoid talking to people in real life. This makes them less likely to do social and academic things.

On the other hand, excessive video game use might drive adolescents away from their school groups and complicate their socializing process. Another crucial issue is how, particularly for teenagers, excessive video game use can damage your mental health. Researchers Lederer-Hutsteiner et al. (2024) investigated your mental state after late-night video game playing. They found that students who play video games more often are more likely to have sleeplessness, anxiety, and sadness. Further to these findings, Shermatov's study from 2024 says that mood swings and anger are common emotional effects of being addicted to video games. When these things happen, it is hard for students to handle their social and academic health. This makes it harder for them to do well in school.

#### 4. Getting a good mix between schoolwork, personal tasks, and games

One important thing to learn about how playing games online can hurt your schoolwork is how to handle your time. Studies like Cabrillos et al. (2023) and Gabrito et al. (2023) discuss finding time for games and schoolwork. Many students say they have trouble managing their time well and often choose to play video games over being smart or doing chores. This change in time makes it harder for students to do well in school and puts them off doing vital work to play video games. There is also a theme about how parents, teachers, and politicians can help students find a balance between homework and playing video games. Several studies, like the ones by Alzahrani and Griffiths (2024), show that students should be given clear rules and advice about games to avoid getting in the way of their schoolwork. One idea is to teach students how to control their game habits while focusing on schoolwork. This could lessen the harmful effects of online gaming.

There are a lot of different parts to the link between playing video games online and doing well in school, as shown by the theme analysis. Playing video games too much can hurt students' grades, brains, and feelings. However, playing games in moderation may be suitable for your brain and social life, which can help your grades. There needs to be a reasonable approach to

gaming so that students, teachers, and parents can get the most out of online games while lowering the risks.

In the future, experts should try to figure out the little things that affect how people play games, especially what makes some people hooked. It would also be helpful to know more about the mental and social factors that affect the link between games and doing well in school. This would help teachers better deal with their students' video game use.

### Discussion

This discussion has a theme because students were asked to discuss their experiences with online games and how they affected their grades. We can tell how students feel about the link between school and online games by looking at what they talk about repeatedly in their accounts. This talk is mostly about four things: the two sides of gaming, academic distractions and putting things off, making friends through gaming, and managing time and responsibilities.

#### 1. Games online can be fun or make you lose focus.

Playing video games can be fun and keep your mind sharp. When students talked, they often said playing video games is a fun way to unwind and keep their minds sharp. Many say computer games help them unwind after a long school day. Many people also said that some games are mentally demanding because you have to plan, solve problems, and think quickly. They all agreed that playing computer games in moderation keeps their minds active and awake, especially when working together to solve problems. Making plans and working with other people can help your mind grow.

*"Some games make me think more clearly."*

*"However, I should be careful not to do too much of it. Sometimes, it helps me with schoolwork."*

A study by Zubiri and Tomacruz (2014) says that playing modest games can help with cognitive skills like thinking about space and being able to do more than one thing at once. However, students also pointed out the dangers of consuming too much video game time. They knew that too much video game time could hurt their grades.

When students skip school to play games, they do worse in school and are less interested in it. Many students do not do well in school because they are addicted to video games (Cabrillos et al., 2023), and these students agree.

## 2. Being distracted and putting off schoolwork

People talked a lot about how playing games on the internet can help you forget about schoolwork. They said they played video games to avoid doing their schoolwork, which made them put it off more often.

*"I know I have work to do sometimes, but playing a game makes me feel better."*

*"I tell myself I'll do it after one more level, but that level turns into hours."*

Students do not do as well in school when they keep putting things off and getting distracted. Many students struggle to focus on their work because they enjoy playing games. A study by Gabbrito et al. (2023) found that students who play too many video games have trouble with their schoolwork. Students also know that playing games gives them short-term pleasure, which makes homework seem less appealing and makes them put it off even longer. The students also admitted to neglecting their homework because of too much video gaming play. Many claimed that some games kept them occupied for hours and that they would not perform their duties since they were so hooked on them. At least sure of the players acknowledged:

*"I forget time when I play video games."*

*"I still have to do homework; it has been hours. My grades suffer as I play more, particularly in light of approaching examinations."*

*"This helps me to consider how time-consuming games are."*

They also said that switching from games to schoolwork was hard, which was an essential point of view. Many students said studying after playing computer games for a long time was tough.

*"My mind is still on the game when I am done playing it."*

*"I cannot study or do my homework because I still think about what happened in the game."*

This brain transfer effect shows how tough it is for teens to live different lives at school and in video games. The extra time it takes to study and play games simultaneously can make schoolwork even more challenging to finish. This is another way that putting things off can add up.

## 3. Making friends through video games

Many students said that games can be good because they help people connect. Several participants said that playing online games helps them make new friends and keep in touch with old ones. They also said they feel like they are part of a game group worldwide. Someone from the class said:

*"Games have made me many friends."*

*"We help each other out and sometimes learn new things together in games. You should not just play games but also hang out with others."*

For these students, playing computer games is more than just having fun. They feel like they belong. People can work together better in internet games where you play with a team. People in the class even said playing video games made them better leaders and speakers. Hayes et al. (2024) say that this point of view is supported by research that shows how online games can create virtual communities where people can work together and meet new people. Being nasty and being alone are two bad social situations.

However, it is only sometimes a good thing that games bring people together. Some students feared lousy behavior and stalking might happen in online game groups. One user said that sometimes the nasty exchanges can make the social benefits of games less noticeable:

*"People in the game are mean sometimes and call you names or say you deserve to lose. It's not fun, and I wish I could play by myself sometimes."*

When these students have bad experiences online, they may feel alone, similar to how they do not connect with people in real life. These two parts of gaming's social effects show how hard it is to make friends online. Either students can find helpful groups or be lonely and bullied online (Dumrique & Castillo, 2018).

## 4. Making notes about time and things to do

Not being able to tell the time. A lot of the time, people talked about how hard it was for the students to find time for both school and games. Many students said they were not good at handling their time, and most agreed it was hard to do both. As one person put it: This is a great mix.

*"I know I shouldn't play video games all the time, but I can't stop once I start."*

This feeling shows how tough it is to keep yourself in check when hooked on video games. Most of the time, students choose to play video games over doing their schoolwork. This means they play games for too long. A study (Cabrillos et al., 2023) says that students who cannot find a good balance between school and games often do not do their work and do poorly in school. Notwithstanding these problems, several children mentioned enjoying games and doing their homework simultaneously. Some claimed they gave themselves time to play video games as a reward for performing well in school and, therefore, held back from them.

*"I try to treat myself with video games."*

*"For example, I will finish my homework first and then spend one hour or two playing."*

Students who use self-control this way know how important balance is, even if it is tough to keep. It also means that teaching students how to manage their time could help them stay on top of school and games. Students have a tough time with internet gaming. If they do not play too much, it can help them learn and make friends, but if they do, it can become very addicting and make them fall behind in school, put things off, and feel stressed. Students know that video games can benefit them in some ways, like keeping their minds busy and helping them meet new people. However, they also know they need to control how much they play video games to avoid getting in the way of their homework.

### Summary of Discussion

This theme-based talk shows how important it is for teachers, parents, and politicians to help students control their gaming habits by teaching them how to handle their time, stay in control, and deal with the negative social aspects of online gaming. Students were asked to talk in-depth about how playing video games affects their schoolwork, and four major themes came out of those conversations:

#### 1. The Two Sides of Online Gaming

Students said playing games in moderation was fun and mentally stimulating and taught them skills like being creative and working with others to solve problems. However, students said playing too many games hurt their grades; they felt hooked, lost track of time, and did poorly in school.

#### 2. Distractions and Putting Things Off in School

Many students said they played computer games to avoid doing their schoolwork, which made them put things off and need help focusing on their work. They also had trouble switching between playing games and studying, worsening their grades.

#### 3. Making Friends Through Gaming

Students can make friends and connect with others through online gaming, but it also puts them at risk for abuse and bad behavior. Some people said that games helped them work together and feel like they belonged, but others said that they felt alone and mentally stressed out because of harmful interactions.

#### 4. Managing Time and Duties

Students found it challenging to balance games and schoolwork, which shows they needed help managing their time. Some used games as rewards, but most said it was hard to set boundaries, which made them put off chores and pay less attention in class.

There you have it: Students know the good and bad things about games. They think they need to fine-tune their balance and self-control so that playing too many video games does not interfere with their homework. Organizing their time well and getting help from their teachers and parents will help them do these things well.

### CONCLUSION

The study showed how students' internet use for games affects their schoolwork. Too much time spent on online games hurts academic growth, even though it has some brain benefits, like making new friends and improving problem-solving skills. Many students said that problems with putting things off, managing their time, and being distracted were closely linked to poor academic success. The harmful effects on schoolwork were made worse by the link between playing video games too much and mental health issues like worry and not getting enough sleep.

The results show how important it is for students to learn to control themselves and stay balanced before playing video games. Students need to be pushed by parents, teachers, and lawmakers to find a better mix between homework and video games. Managing your time well and understanding the psychological causes of gaming addiction can help you keep the positive effects of



online gaming and avoid the negative ones. More studies should be done on the complicated effects of gaming on education, especially on how to control how much you play online games to help your brain grow and reduce the adverse effects of gaming addiction.

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