

## **CHAPTER II**

### **TOXIC BEHAVIOR IN ONLINE GAMES: MOBILE LEGENDS BANG-BANG AMONG STUDENTS**

This chapter describes the further explanation of toxic behavior in online games, Mobile Legends Bang-Bang among students in Indonesia. In this chapter, it will help more understanding about toxic behavior among Mobile Legends' players by highlighting supporting data related to toxic behavior in online game.

#### **2.1 The Nature of Game Playing Mobile Legends**

Development and distribution of Mobile Legend: Bang Bang (MLBB), a multiplayer online battle arena (MOVA) game, came under Moonton. Because to its competitive character, fast-paced gameplay, and simplicity of access via mobile devices, it has become rather popular especially among students and teenagers. The game calls for two opposing teams of five players apiece to protect their own base and attack and destroy the base of the adversary (Wijaya & Santoso, 2020).

Several essential characteristics define the nature of playing Mobile Legends:

##### **2.1.1 Competitive Gameplay**

Mobile Legend is quite competitive. It drives players to grow in ranks and challenge each other. This competitive surroundings encourages both motivation and pressure, which can lead to emotional reactions including frustration, wrath, and, in some cases, destructive behaviour. (2020; Kordyaka, Jah, & Niehaves).

### **2.1.2 Team Cooperation and Communication**

Teammates in Mobile Legend have to cooperate and communicate well if they are to succeed. Players often interact using in-game text chat or voice chat. Negative behaviour, especially when players perform poorly or make mistakes, can be encouraged by these pathways, but (Liu & Agur, 2023).

### **2.1.3 Emotional Engagement**

Mobile Legend's immersive character sets out strong emotional emotions. Increased emotional states brought on by the strain in close matches, the gratification of triumph, and the disappointment of defeat all affect players' relationship to others in the game setting (Rosyad & Hidyanto, 2024).

### **2.1.4 Identity and Status Building**

Many young players of Mobile Legend find success as a kind of social identity. Rising high or possessing unique skins can let one stand out among peers, therefore transforming the game from a mere platform for self-expression and recognition to something more.

## **2.2 How Intensity of Game Playing Mobile Legends Affects Toxic Behavior**

Especially among students, Mobile Legend's competitive and emotionally strong nature might lead to negative behaviour. The fast-paced, team-based gameplay of the game might reduce responsibility and inspire players to vent anger without thinking through real-life repercussions. Negative ideas can be spread using chat systems, for

instance; rating systems increase emotional tension. Moreover, exposure to harmful behaviour by friends or well-known gaming influencers could normalise it, allowing young players to copy it (Rosyad & Hidyanto, 2024). Regular engagement with these dynamics over time can help to sustain negative attitudes and behaviours in the gaming environment and perhaps in real-world interactions as well. When players fail or lose, it can be frustrating and lead to angry communication, blame, and verbal abuse. In the internet environment, anonymity (Liu & Agur, 2023). Moreover, the social setting of Mobile Legend usually encourages negative behaviour by means of community regulations and peer contacts (Liu & Agur, 2023). In gaming communities, players may be motivated to assert control or acquire approval by using aggressive or offensive communication patterns (Kordyaka et al., 2020). For students still developing their social identity and emotional maturity especially this is crucial. Gaming culture absorbs toxic behaviour when peers or streamers either accept it or even encourage it. Toxic behaviour thus keeps on and spreads, maybe affecting players' opinions and communication style outside of the game.

### **2.3 Trend of Toxic Behavior Due to the Intensity of Game Playing Mobile Legends and the Intensity of YouTube Gaming Access**

The rising popularity of online multiplayer games like Mobile Legends: Bang Bang (MLBB) in recent years has matched a notable rise in negative behaviour among players, especially teenagers and college students. Toxic behaviour encompasses unpleasant actions include flaming, verbal abuse, criticising colleagues, and using bad language when playing or in gaming forums (Rosyad & Hidyanto, 2024). Two main

elements usually connect this inclination to two main factors: the degree of exposure to gaming content on YouTube and the gameplay intensity. A player's likelihood of coming across demanding circumstances such as losing streaks, poor team cooperation, or matching underperforming players increases with frequency and intensity of Mobile Legend participation. These events set off feelings including disappointment, irritation, and fury. As coping strategies, players could start to normalise hostile or aggressive reactions over time.

Apart from gaming, Gen Z regularly views a lot of Mobile Legends-related content on YouTube. This covers livestreams, reaction videos, lessons in gameplay, and influencer comments. Although fun and educational, such materials might also affect behavioural norms (Cook et al., 2022).