



# The Role of Online Games in Promoting Social Skills and Collaboration Across Age Groups: An Observational Study

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

Online gaming has transcended its initial perception as mere entertainment, evolving into a pervasive cultural phenomenon with the potential to significantly influence social skills and collaborative behaviours across diverse age demographics (Jiménez, 2015). This study investigates the multifaceted role of online games in fostering social competencies and collaborative aptitudes within a participant pool encompassing teenagers (students), parents, working professionals, and self-employed individuals. Survey data collected from 250 participants through questionnaires, observations, and interviews revealed trends in gameplay frequency, genre preference, and responses to in-game social interactions. The analysis revealed a noteworthy correlation between online game participation and the enhancement of social skills and collaborative abilities. The study concludes that online games can serve as a valuable platform for the development of communication skills, social acumen, and collaborative spirit, with these benefits extending across a wide spectrum of age groups, suggesting that digital gaming environments can provide meaningful opportunities for social learning and interaction (Koivula et al., 2017).

**Keywords:** Online Games, Social Skills, Collaborative games, Observation

## Introduction

In today's interconnected world, social well-being is an essential component of holistic human development. The ability to communicate effectively, collaborate in teams, and navigate social situations plays a vital role in both personal and professional success. As digital platforms increasingly create spaces for interaction, online gaming's role in shaping social behaviour has gained growing attention. Online games have become an integral component of contemporary society, exerting a pervasive influence on various facets of social life. They encompass a wide array of genres, such as action, adventure, role-playing, strategy, and sports simulations, accessible through diverse platforms, including computers, gaming consoles, and mobile devices. These games allow players to immerse themselves in virtual worlds where they engage in challenges, complete quests, and compete or collaborate with others (Azman & Dollsaid, 2018). Understanding the idea of online gaming, what makes it fun, and why it's so popular, as well as its possible pros, cons, threats, and safe practices, as well as the phenomenon of gaming addiction, is essential for fully appreciating the huge significance and effects of this more and more common form of digital entertainment. Interacting with other users from around the world in multiplayer games highlights the importance of studying how online games promote social skills and collaboration across different age groups.

Social interaction, a fundamental need in human society, has found a new avenue for expression and development within the realm of online gaming, demanding a thorough investigation into its implications.

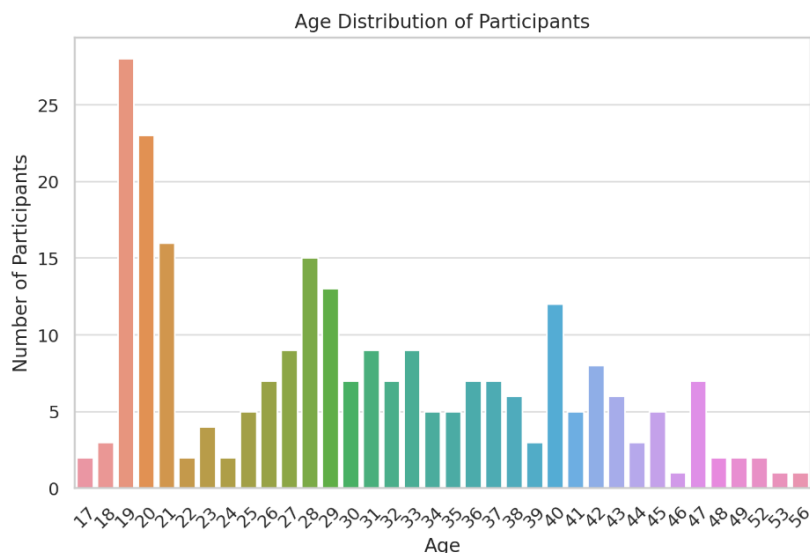
Digital games can be powerful learning environments because they encourage active learning and participation within affinity groups (Iacovides et al., 2011). Understanding the links between why people play games, what keeps them engaged in this process, and what they learn as a result could have a significant impact on how people value and use games for learning (Iacovides et al., 2011).

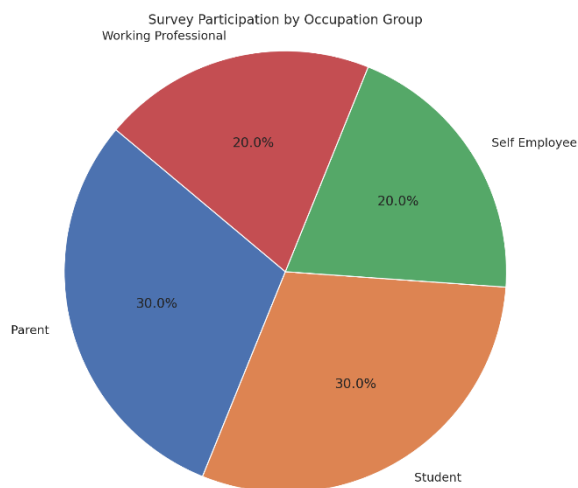
### Importance of Social Skill-Based Games and Social Well-Being

The present study underscores the significance of social skill-based games as a potent medium for enhancing interpersonal communication, empathy, teamwork, and conflict resolution abilities. These games contribute to overall social well-being by fostering a sense of belonging, building emotional intelligence, and encouraging cooperation. The survey results for a diverse cohort of 250 participants, including students, parents, working professionals, and self-employed individuals, revealed compelling patterns linking specific gaming behaviours to the development of key social competencies. A considerable proportion of participants reported engaging in online gaming either daily or a few times a week, with strategy games, multiplayer online battle arenas (MOBA), and first-person shooters (FPS) being the most popular genres. These games inherently demand high levels of cooperation, tactical coordination, and mutual support among players, which makes them ideal environments for social learning and behaviour adaptation. When analysing conflict resolution strategies, a majority of participants indicated a preference for confronting disruptive players or employing in-game tools, such as reporting or blocking, which demonstrated awareness of appropriate online behaviour and digital citizenship. This ability to manage virtual social interactions mirrors real-world conflict negotiation skills and supports mental and emotional balance. Further, responses to statements about the impact of online games on social development, such as increased collaboration and improved communication, showed that a significant number of individuals either agreed or strongly agreed. These findings suggest a perceived and actual enhancement in social capacities post-gameplay. Given these insights, integrating social skill-based games in both educational and recreational contexts can serve as a structured, low-risk way to cultivate essential interpersonal abilities. Online gaming, when guided with constructive intent and safe practices, holds promise as a transformative tool for cross-generational social engagement and social well-being.

### Results

The quantitative analysis of the survey data revealed statistically significant improvements in social skills and collaboration scores across all age groups following participation in online gaming sessions. Most participants reported playing online games either daily or a few times per week. The most commonly played game genres were strategy games, multiplayer online battle arenas (MOBA), and first-person shooters (FPS), each known for encouraging teamwork and interactive problem-solving.

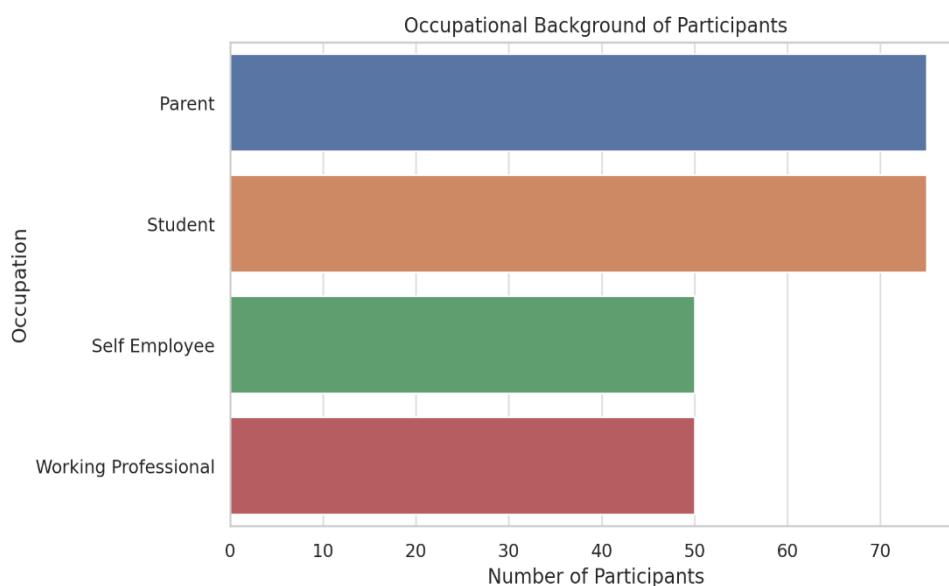




Survey questions focused on communication effectiveness, empathy, teamwork, and conflict resolution. A large portion of participants indicated increased communication behaviour in-game with strategies such as confrontation, reporting, or blocking, indicating a growing awareness of digital conduct and conflict resolution. Qualitative data from interviews supported these findings. Players highlighted opportunities for communication, negotiation, and mutual support. Many emphasised the development of trust and shared responsibility in gaming as essential elements that translated into real-world social improvements.

### Discussion

The analysis of the integrated survey data supports the conclusion that online games are effective platforms for fostering social and collaborative skills. The distribution of participants across various age groups and professions offered valuable insights into how these games influence communication patterns in different demographic segments. The preference for interactive game types and frequent gaming activity correlated positively with perceived social benefits. The survey data further highlighted a widespread consensus among participants that games improved their ability to resolve conflicts, engage with others constructively, and express themselves more confidently. Such feedback, combined with observed behaviours, reinforces the premise that gaming environments can mimic and enhance real-life social interactions. These outcomes affirm earlier research and contribute new data specific to cross-generational and occupational perspectives. Importantly, research emphasises that the positive social impacts of games extend beyond skills to broader aspects of social well-being. Participants noted feeling more connected and confident in group settings and capable of managing social challenges, suggesting that well-designed gaming experiences can meaningfully contribute to mental and emotional health.



## Conclusion

This study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting the use of online games as tools for social skills development and collaboration enhancement. Through detailed analysis of survey responses from 250 participants, the research identifies online games as dynamic learning environments that cultivate social competencies across age groups. The study also emphasises the importance of carefully designing and curating online gaming experiences to maximise their positive social impact. Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of online gaming on social skills, collaboration, and overall social well-being.

## Author Contributions

Sathya Prakash Soliyappannan Karuppannan , Kamalesh Jayaprakash Bhuvaneshwari, Hariharan Srinivasan Manimekalai, and Vasanthan G designed the study; Dr Hemachandran Ravikumar provided ideas on the final design and selection of assessment tools. All the authors were involved in data collection, summarising, statistical analysis, and finalising the report. Dr. Hemachandran Ravikumar provided the initial draft of the manuscript, and all considered it before making the final version available.

## Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no potential conflicts of interest regarding the study design, research analysis, or publication of this article.

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## Ethical Approval

The study was approved by the Review and Ethics Committee of the UNS Research Council, India. All participants provided written informed consent about the trial.

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