

Chapter 10

The Rise of Digital Gaming in India a Comprehensive Study on User Engagement and Gamification: Digital Gaming

Dharmendra Singh

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0966-6530>

Modern College of Business and Science, Oman

Garima Malik

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3892-8299>

Birla Institute of Management Technology, India

Swati Bhatnagar

New Delhi Institute of Management, India

ABSTRACT

Gamification and gaming have rapidly evolved as significant phenomena in India, with research on gamification gaining momentum since 2011. In recent years, this area has attracted increasing attention from practitioners, researchers, and policymakers alike, driven by the expanding size and influence of the gaming industry. This paper explores the current trends, challenges, and opportunities within the Indian gaming ecosystem, emphasizing the role of gamification in enhancing user engagement and driving industry growth. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining primary data collected through online surveys and interviews

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with secondary data from scholarly articles and market reports. Findings reveal that factors such as game genre, platform preference, and graphic design quality significantly influence player engagement and the rising popularity of esports in India. The research highlights diverse gamer profiles and underscores the need for adaptive strategies in game development and marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

The gaming industry in India is still at a relatively nascent stage, yet it is evolving at an unprecedented pace. It represents a paradigm shift in entertainment, reshaping the landscape of digital engagement and immersive experiences. This transformation is indicative of how technological advancements are deeply interwoven with the socio-cultural and economic fabric of society (KPMG, 2023). The proliferation of smartphones and mobile internet access has been instrumental in democratizing gaming, making it accessible across demographic and geographic boundaries. As a result, gaming has transcended its earlier perception as a generational fad or casual hobby to become a mainstream pursuit and a viable career option for many young Indians (RedSeer, 2022). The roots of the Indian gaming industry trace back to the early 2000s with the emergence of console and PC-based games. However, it was the advent of affordable mobile technology and increasing internet penetration that truly catalyzed the industry's explosive growth (EY-FICCI, 2024). Today, India is home to one of the world's fastest-growing gaming markets, attracting substantial investments from global technology giants such as Tencent, Alibaba, Nazara Technologies, and Microsoft Azure (Invest India, 2023). These strategic investments have expanded the gaming ecosystem, supporting both developers and consumers alike.

The Indian gaming market was valued at approximately USD 3.1 billion in 2023 and is projected to grow to USD 5.83 billion by 2034, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16.2% (Mordor Intelligence, 2024). This rapid expansion is not just driven by mobile gaming but also by the rise of esports, casual and hyper-casual games, and the adoption of emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and blockchain-based Web3 platforms (NASSCOM, 2023). These innovations are transforming India into a hub for game-centric technological innovation and entrepreneurship. Moreover, the gaming industry's contribution goes beyond mere entertainment. It has emerged as a significant contributor to economic development through job creation, skill enhancement, and digital entrepreneurship. By 2034, the industry is expected to generate a considerable number of employment opportunities, particularly in game development, design, marketing, and esports management (Deloitte, 2023). This growth also necessitates specialized training and education programs to build the workforce required to sustain the industry's

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