Preferences and Future of Gaming and E-Sports in India

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Abstract

The objective of this research paper is to understand the mentality and preferences of E-sports players in the country. With a pandemic such as COVID-19 disrupting the entire market there were very few industries that actually boomed during this period and one such industry was the E-sports industry. With the imposition of lockdown in the country, it was noticed that a large number of people had started playing E-sports and the demand for E-sports related accessories has also seen a sudden surge. With such tremendous rise in the E-sports Industry there are a lot of aspects that need to understand about the E-sports scenario in the country. The purpose of this research is to understand the taste and preferences of various E-sports players and what are the basic amenities that Indian players utilize.

Keywords: eSports, Gaming, Indian eSports, Psychology of eSports

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1. Introduction

In the past two decades the gaming industry has seen a lot of changes. Once upon a time video games were only played for recreation and entertainment and the only viewers were your friends, siblings and family members but over the years the reach of video games has become widespread with viewership over 300 million and the industry as a whole reaching the billion dollar mark (1).

The first ever eSports event took place in the year 1972, where students of Stamford University took part in the event where they competed each other in a video game called as ‘Space wars’ but it wasn’t until 1980 where the first ever major video game competition was held. It was the ‘Space Invaders Championship’ and it got a wide spread attention with over 10000 enthusiasts participating in the event (2).

Various changes have taken in the video game industry came with gaming zones followed by Cyber cafes and in today’s date video games has become a main source of entertainment for many people which can be easily accessed at the comfort of their homes and they are easily accessible too.

The technology for gaming has also seen a lot of changes over the years. Earlier there were just video games which needed cassettes to play them, then with the revolution of computers came Gaming CD’s. Then Nintendo and Sony came with their own gaming consoles in Nintendo Gameboy and Sony PSP(3). Following the gaming revolution there were many new game setups that followed in SONY Play station and X boxes. During the same period there was a tremendous revolution in a new and smart technology, Smart phones. With the introduction of Android and IOS there was a tremendous growth in the field of mobile phones.

Mobile phones as a device were mainly intended to communicate with people but over the years the use of mobile phones has changed from basic calling to everything under the...
The use of mobile phones nowadays ranges from basic entertainment to presentations in corporate meetings. But with the entry of major companies in the field of applications compatible for multi-player mobile gaming has caused more eSports base with researchers suggesting that mobile gaming would outpace the magnification of PC in the coming years. Newzoo, a researching company suggests that the overall share of PC gaming would be around 23% whereas 46% of the total share would be hogged by mobile and tablet gaming by 2022.

The main objective of this research was to understand the taste, preference and future of eSports in the country.

The significance of eSports has grown many folds. There was a time when eSports was considered as just a source of entertainment which was mainly used for recreational practices, but over the years it has turned into a bankable way of generating revenue for proficient players. In the year 2018 ‘The international Olympics Committee’ has proclaimed eSports to be a sporting activity where it reaches a great amount of youth and important sector of market for business which has created a great scope of job opportunities in this field.

Streaming a game live has had a significant impact in the lives of various streamers on online platform namely, PewDiePie on Youtube and Ninja on Mixer who have strengthened their fanbase with gamers and non-gamers alike. The streamers have millions of followers who stream these games and interact creating a strong bond with their followers.

eSports also gives an opportunity for various physically challenged and other individuals to be a part of the sport even if they can’t participate in the actual sport. It helps them to include in the sport by understanding the tactics and nuances of the game. To differentiate from the actual sport where you need talent and a lot of hard work to be in professional in eSports anyone can turn into professional by focusing on certain motor skills such as hand-eye coordination to become a better player.

The study of this research can be a learning paradigm for understanding the nuances of eSports, their preferences in different gears, the mentality of the players and the problems faced by them while playing the sport in the country.

2. Methodology

2.1 Subjects

The subjects were under the age of 25 from across the country to understand their taste and preferences of an eSports user and the different problems faced by them. The sample size for the study was 115.

2.2 Data Collection:

Questionnaire was used as a source for gathering Primary data from avid eSports users to understand their taste and preferences. Purposive Sampling method was used to accumulate the primary data from the sample group. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling in which a selective population are chosen to participate in the research. The questionnaire was sent to more than 100 people under the age of 25 to understand the taste and preference of the eSports players.

2.3 Variables Selected:

The variables were Knowledge of games, Dedication towards gaming, Gaming Trends, Preferences of eSports players and Problems and views for improving eSports.
3. Results and Discussion:

1) Knowledge of games:

There are various genres of games that can be played on eSports and it ranges from Action games such as Counter Strike, Sports games such as FIFA and NBA and various such other games.

![Figure 1: Genre of Games the respondents prefer playing](image)

As a gamer, the person gets very thrilled when any new type of game is released, but, there isn’t a game which is tailored for everyone, that would be because the taste of each individual is different. Figure 1 shows various genre of games preferred by respondents. There are certain games which you get hooked onto and there are certain which wouldn’t be your cup of tea. This might be one of the reasons where the gaming industry is bifurcated into various parts based on their taste and preferences. The entire eSports is divided into some of the following types:

**Racing games:** Racing games is a genre where the people who are passionate about racing such as F1 or Moto GP might get inclined to play. As mentioned earlier driving a car or a bike at a speed of 300 kmph might not be everyone but playing these games at least they get a feel of how things would have been if they would have been behind the wheels and with the development of technology they have developed play stations just for racing enthusiasts. A meager 1.74% of the entire population indulges in racing games (2 out of 115).

**Strategy games:** Strategy games are games where more than motor skills you need mental strength and you can dictate plays in such games by creating strategies understanding the opposition team and there are many individuals who prefer such games. 17 out of 115 have an inclination towards Strategy Games, which is 14.78% of the total surveyors.

**Role Play Gaming:** Role Play Gaming also known as RPG is where you adopt a character and play games where you play missions and achieve various Awards in games which helps you keep going and get into the game. It can be played individually and also as a group. A total of 3.5% participate in Role play Gaming.
**Sandbox:** Sandbox games and RPG are of the same category where the main difference would be that it doesn’t only limit itself to role play. There are various games such as SIMS and Minecraft where you design your own vision of fun whereas in open world games and RPG.

**Open world games:** Open World games refer to games such as GTA 5. GTA 5 is a game where the player can roam around and do as he pleases without even bothering about any missions per se. Almost 54% of the total participants prefer playing such games.

**Battle Royale:** A battle royal game is an online multiplayer video game genre that blends the survival, exploration, and scavenging elements of a survival game with last-man-standing gameplay. Battle royal games involve dozens to hundreds of players who start with minimal equipment and then must eliminate all other opponents while avoiding being trapped outside of a shrinking "safe area", with the winner being the last player or team alive. The name for the genre is taken from the 2000 Japanese film Battle Royale, itself based on the novel of the same name, which presents a similar theme of a last-man-standing competition in a shrinking play zone.53% of the games have an inclination towards such games.

**Sports Games:** It is a genre of gaming that simulates the practice of famous sports such as Football, Basketball and many others in an eSports format. Most sports have been recreated with a game, including team sports, track and field, extreme sports and combat sports. Some games emphasize actually playing the sport (such as the Madden NFL series), whilst others emphasize strategy and sport management (such as Championship Manager and Out of the Park Baseball). Some, such as Need for Speed, Arch Rivals and Punch-Out! satirize the sport for comic effect. This genre has been popular throughout the history of video games and is competitive, just like real-world sports. A number of game series feature the names and characteristics of real teams and players, and are updated annually to reflect real-world changes. Sports genre is one of the oldest genres in gaming history.

Sports games are the most played eSports games with 63.5% of the gamers playing them.

**Action Games:** An action game is a video game genre that emphasizes physical challenges, including hand–eye coordination and reaction-time. The genre includes a large variety of sub-genres, such as fighting games, beat ‘em ups, shooter games and platform games. Multiplayer online battle arena and some real-time strategy games are also considered action games.

After Sports Games the second most played genre of games are Action Games with 60% of the players playing.

**Figure 2: Are you familiar with any of the following eSports Tournament organizers?**

The above figure consists of few major eSports companies in the world. This question was drafted to understand the knowledge of the eSports fraternity in the country and it can be seen, 48% of the total survey members knew ESL making it famous among Indian users.

Whereas 39% (45 people out of 115) had no knowledge of any eSports companies, which helps us to understand that they were never serious about eSports as a career.

2) Dedication towards gaming:

![Figure 3: Invest time to get better.](image-url)

The author wanted to understand the seriousness of eSports players in the country to understand the possibility of a player who could have gone pro if there were sufficient opportunities provided to them. But even without mentioning about the possibility of opportunities 76 out of the 115 have said yes (66%) whereas only 10 out of 115 have said no which is a meager 9% and 25% are on the fence regarding this decision. This shows the seriousness of eSports player in our country, it might just be for pride against their friends, only if they could have made a career out of it.

![Figure 4: Money invested in gaming equipment](image-url)

Gaming equipment are just an additional factor which assists in better performance but it does not mean that people who have not invested cannot play as good as them. But as a eSports enthusiast I can easily say that all these factors play a major role in your overall performance. When you invest in gaming equipment you ensure that you stay at the same level as your competitors and the small details might affect your overall performance.

77 people that is 67% of the total study group has at least invested in at least 1 of the computer accessories where as 33% have not invested at all.
The above figure shows the list of products that the gamers have invested in as you can see Controller is one of the main components that most of our gamers have invested in followed by a mouse and keyboard. If you compare the above question and this one you can clearly see that many people have not realized how they have actually invested on things without even realizing the true meaning behind it. If you compare with the last question where 1/3rd of the entire population thought that they had not invested on things but after scrutinizing and thinking over it they realized how they have invested more than they could have imagined.

Over 50% of the players have invested in Controller and mouse.

Figure 5: Products gamers invested their money in.

Figure 6: Statistics of people using the Cyber café for gaming

Cybercafé has many purposes but for many people’s information, gaming is also one of the reasons why Cybercafé is used. As you can see from the above graph 80% of the entire survey that is 92 people have visited Cyber café to play games and Cyber café which many

people don’t know is also used as a hub for various eSports Tournaments and people who visit cyber-café for eSports with their friends tend to get more competitive and perform much better

3) Gaming Trends:

![Figure 7: Streaming preferences and history.](image1)

Streaming is where the player broadcasts his gameplay to people and from the table above you can see that almost 80% of the Indians don’t stream but we can see the changes in the future and it shows us where there is a scope in Indian eSports scenario.

![Figure 8: Streaming Platforms used](image2)

From the above table we already knew that 75% people never streamed but the other 20% did stream and their main Platform was YouTube and Twitch where they created their own ID and have posted their gameplay. Platforms such as InstaGib TV, Mixer, Hitbox and Azubu are still not made rave in the Indian Market.
4) Preferences of eSports players:

As you can see from the above table PC is the main platform preferred by Indian Audience followed by Mobile phones. Very few people use XBOX and Nintendo Switch.

![Preferred Platform](image1)

![Mode of Network used](image2)

As you can see from the above table PC is the main platform preferred by Indian Audience followed by Mobile phones. Very few people use XBOX and Nintendo Switch.

Net speed makes a huge difference for online multi-player games. Multi-player online games are played where all the participants connect to each other using internet and if the user has a low speed of internet it becomes an issue as the game will show a delay while the game is on leading to delay in server response causing you to lose.

Internet connectivity can be established using 3 modes. Ethernet, Wi-Fi and Mobile data. Ethernet is where you directly connect to the internet using a wire setting, whereas everyone might know about Wi-Fi stands for Wireless Fidelity where you get internet access without the connection to wire and Mobile data is using your sim card operators internet and from the below we can see that most of the users use Wi-Fi the most for gaming, followed by...
mobile data and finally Ethernet is used by a huge lot too, but Wi-Fi is the most used mode for using the internet

Figure 11: Network Speed

Internet speed matters a lot in online multi-player games as a fraction of seconds makes a huge difference too and below we asked in our survey for the net speed that they use to understand the kind of response they might be getting from their internet providers and from the results we can see that only 8 people use an internet speed of below 1 mbps which is too low compared to approx. 50% of the total users opting for a speed over 5 mbps which is decent for gaming.

The usual required download speed has to be around 3 MBPS whereas the upload speed has to be around 1 MBPS and The ping rate has to be lower than 150 ms.(7)

5) Problems and views for improving eSports:

Lag stands for failing to keep up with another or others in movement or development. During a game when you experience a lag it causes more problems for a eSports player as the lag is the main reason for death or losing a game. Imagine if you are playing FIFA and you are at the crucial moment of the match when your computer lags and as soon as things gets back to normal you see that your opposition has scored a goal. As a eSports player that hurts the most and you feel like breaking your computer or your controller. Many eSports players have broken their controller due to this and funny as it sounds it actually hurts.

-“To be honest, lag is worst experiences with gaming a person can experience during any game. It's rather annoying when it happens in multiple games. The lag might be one of the most major problems since that involves destruction”

-Disturbs the momentum of the game.

This was one of the reviews of the players

-He plays GTA a lot and the game getting lagged is not something uncommon here. He’d genuinely want Rockstar (Company) to fix these problems; He is getting his wifi changed too in a few days.

As seen above few eSports players such drastic changes thus changing their consumption patterns.

The speed in which a small data takes from your device to reaches the internet server and back to your device is called ping. Ping is something which is calculated in milliseconds and lower the ping, better it is for you so the above data shows the ping that most of the gamers face.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to understand the taste, preference and Future of eSports in the country. The aim was to understand the knowledge that the subjects of the study had regarding the different aspects of eSports and the Gaps which can be exploited in the near future.

The study was conducted on the primary data collected through the medium of questionnaire assisted me in understanding the knowledge of current trends of eSports in the country as well as their taste and preferences. I could understand that there was certain genre of games which attracted the users than others, whereas there is a huge gap in streaming which can be exploited by various companies. The knowledge on various eSports company is low which tells us that the companies can market the product better in the country and reach wider audience,

Strategy, Racing, Open World and Role Play gaming have a wider scope of growing. Internet and ping can be improved as the minimum requirement of internet speed should be approximately between 3-6 mbps and the ping ratio has to be lower than 150 which can be achieved by improving the telecom services in the country for better user experience. Knowledge of games- The gamers had tremendous knowledge regarding the term of gaming but there were certain aspects such as the various companies in the field of gaming which was missing. Dedication towards gaming- The players used to play it only for recreational purposes and had no major intention towards making it to the international circuits. Preferences of eSports players- people use wifi over Ethernet or mobile data. The ping ratio is at an acceptable level whereas the speed of internet is a major issue that the players face.

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REFERENCES