

## **E-SPORTS IN INDIA: A GROWING INDUSTRY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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### **Abstract**

The e-sports industry is not new, but not many people are aware that it has been around for a decade already. The present paper aims to study the changing trends in the e-sports sector and its impact on the twenty-first century. The study also focuses on the importance of e-sports during the Covid-19 pandemic. E-sports have become one of the important industries, and making it a career option has been a question of discussion for enthusiasts who have a strong affinity towards gaming. E-sports play a vital role as a good career option in India. In India, E-sports are not just playing video games in a multiplayer setting. As gaming and E-sports are two separate things. Gaming is a casual activity, while e-sports are a professional platform where gamers spend hours to learn and hone their skills in order to become an E-sports athlete.

Keywords: E-sports, gaming, economic development, career, technology.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The word "esports" is gaining more and more popularity day by day. Esports all over the world is a form of sport competition using video games which is often organized into multiple players' video games. The game is between team, professional or individual players. Esports has managed to take over the Indian market mainly because of the promotion and growth done on online streaming such as YouTube and Twitch. The common people are still unaware of that esports industry is more than a decade old and has just shot up in India in the past few years with more developers and investors jumping into this new sector.

The most common video games category of esports are Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA), First Person Shooter (FPS), fighting, card games, battle royale and real-time strategy. Although the authority of esports as a true sporting competition remains

in question, they have been features alongside traditional sports in events such as Asian games, while even the International Olympic Committee are also discussing their inclusion into the future of Olympic events. In India esports accounted for around 4 percent of all online gaming users and 9.13 percent of aggregate revenue out of the overall online gaming market in FY2020. The growth in esports prize money pool by 123.3 percent during 2016-2018 has attracted gaming follower to become professionals in this field.

In between children, teenagers and adults the most liked activity is playing and watching games. Esports is a modern phenomenon where an individual or a team participates in an online gaming tournament without the barrier of age, gender, or nationality. Esports has emerged in the 1990s. Firstly esports get popular in South Korea with variety of games such as First person shooting games, Real-time strategy game and Massively Multiplayer online Role Playing games which has led to fuel up the Esports in both Asia and Western Countries. In India ESFI (Esports Federation of India) handles Esports which focuses on encourage, train, organize, educate and control Esports in India. They have not restricted themselves to organize event and tournament but also an eco-system for Esports in India.

Moreover recent lockdown have fueled online gaming activities. Time spent giving by the youth on online gaming has increased by as much as 50 percent to 80 percent as a direct result of lockdown. Furthermore, live online game streaming on different platforms like YouTube gaming, twitch etc. has played an important role in Esports. The content creators who stream on such platforms are called streamers which have a huge subscriber and follower based due to huge interaction with their subscriber and follower, which is also the main reason for creation of a strong bond with the subscriber or followers. Spectators are the people who follow and experience the game but instead on playing they watch the stream.

Additionally India came in at number 16 on Forbes list, indicating that it is a multibillion-dollar business. With only 25 game creators a decade ago, India's online gaming business was in disarray. In the country today, there are approximately 250 game developers. The convenience of low-cost Smartphone's which everybody cannot obtain from a high-end desktop Computer but now everyone has a Smartphone and access to Wi-Fi is likely to lead to a shift in consumers from feature phones to Smartphone so we can assume that it motivates the consumption of esports. It also happen as everything is shifted to the online mode and because sports media material is delivered via computerised

broadcasting, such as internet streaming, but also because the whole sporting activity is computer-mediated and due to this Streaming and mobile gaming competitions held in faraway locations remain dependent on the sector.

Also many other media platforms have also risen as a result of the esports industry, such as Streaming which has a significant impact on a game's audience and, as a result, the prize money of tournaments involving these universal hit titles, whose streaming isn't just for showing Esports content to the general public, but also for gaining attention and money through commonly used internet broadcasting platforms such as Twitch, Facebook Gaming, and YouTube gaming. Esports is a thriving business internationally, with the global e-sports audience assume to expand at a CAGR of 13.6 percent from 2017-18 to 2021-22, reaching 250 million esports fans. The worldwide e-sports industry is assumed that it expand at a CAGR of 26 percent from 2017 to 2021, reaching USD1.65 billion in revenue.

India's e-sports sector is still in its inception. By 2021, however, the number of casual viewers and e-sports fans is assumed that increased by more than fivefold. Esports consumption is a frequent misunderstanding that video games are only for guys. The increasing use of mobile phones, as well as the emergence of new participants in the video streaming industry, has made gaming content more accessible, particularly to women.

## **OBJECTIVE**

- To study the need for the consumption of the Esports in India.
- To find out the reasons for what are the driving force that motivates people towards Esports.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

*Block, S., & Haack, F. (2021):* The purpose of this paper is to evaluate how eSports has developed in recent years since its first boom phase as well as to analyze its growth factors and how it has contribute to from the COVID-19 pandemic compared to traditional competitive sports. The global eSports earnings and prize money values are evaluated. The first step is defining the eSports phrase and the other is looking at the development of eSports financials since its first boom and onward. The COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts are then looked at. Finally, growth factors for the increasing numbers are hypothesized. The findings of the study shows that eSports has gained significant importance in recent years. In particular, the strong increase in global eSports

revenue and the associated increase in players' prize money clearly show that eSports will continue to gain importance and economic stability in the future.

*Star, S., & Bakshi, N. (2019)*, the researcher here portrayed that esports has seen a global rapid rise in the last few years and India has not been an exception in that regard. Excluding regulatory barriers, India's demographics and cheap nationwide internet connectivity give it a massive competitive advantage in approval of esports. This means that the rate at which an individual who has just entered gaming will become passionate about esports is higher than the rate of people getting into gaming. All this points to a singular fact, the Indian masses are ready for esports. If India can implement the key issues identified above, most notably growing and maturing the regulatory environment, then it should be a global leader in years to come.

*Ghoshal, A. (2019)*, the study states that it has been observed in various examples that esports, much like off-line sports, suffer from the occasional virtue issue amongst esports athletes. Based on their probability of occurrence, and their bias to harm the integrity of esports, the eSports Integrity Coalition, one of the leading regulatory bodies within the domain of esports has classified ethics issues within esports into two broad areas: cheating to win and cheating to lose. There are also incidental ethics issues that plague all sports, in the form of betting and gambling.

## **ESPORTS AS A CAREER OPPORTUNITY IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

Esports in India is not just about playing in a multiplayer setting. Gaming and Esports are two different things. Gaming is a casual activity that anyone can do while being on their jobs just for entertainment while Esports is a professional platform where gamers spend hours to learn and make sharp their skills in order to become an Esports athlete. Here are the reasons why Esports in India have become a good career option for participants:

- The promotion and various campaigns that run on different social media platforms, preferably, YouTube and Instagram is the reason for growing esports market in India.
- India is on the threshold of entering into online casinos where players would be able to play from the comfort of their own home without actually going to the casino.

- Though the affordability and accessibility of Smartphone's have contributed a lot in shaping up the gaming industry in India.
- High-speed 4G and 5G internet has been a vital element in the industry.
- Game developers are working day in and out to give better services to all the players, a unique game room for the online players, different earning opportunities for all the players.
- The evolution of Esports online cafes has given rise to aspirant tournaments where players train themselves and make well-equipped for the tournaments that have high stakes.

A career in esports is currently one of the most popular jobs with the youth in India and while the industry is relatively new, the probable it presents in terms of popularity, reach and earning potential cannot be prohibited. A report by FICCI-EY revealed that the number of online gamers in India touched 65 million in 2019 that is expected to reach 440 million by 2022.

**Table 1: Showing Gaming benefits**

Gaming Benefits	
<b>Foundation Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achievement Drive</li> <li>- Self-Awareness</li> <li>- Productive Thinking</li> <li>- Self-confidence</li> <li>- LLN</li> </ul>	<b>Performance Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Perceptual</li> <li>- Motor</li> <li>- Attentional</li> <li>- Timing</li> <li>- Process skills</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Development Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identity Achievement</li> <li>- Interpersonal Competence</li> <li>- Digital Literacy/Competence</li> <li>- Esteem</li> <li>- Cognitive</li> </ul>	<b>Team Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Communication</li> <li>- Cohesion</li> <li>- Team Confidence</li> <li>- Decision-Making</li> </ul>

Esports is comparably a new tide towards esports as a hobby and a career option was not a coincidence; it has happened due to the completion of various factors such as increased access to affordable internet, the introduction of 5G, and the massive investments flowing into the sector. These factors combined with an increasingly modern and connected millennial and Gen-Z audience has driven the gaming industry to new

heights in the past few years. As the interest evolves from pursuing it as a hobby or a remedial activity as some might say, to as a professional career, the opportunities it presents to Indian youth are vast.

## **CONCLUSION**

Online gaming has become one of the most popular activities in home entertainment the past few years. Esports industry has been expanded because of recent technological innovation and significant improvements in internet connections and the computing power of most devices. Resulting, in the multiplication of gaming genres and the adaptation of all sorts of games into the digital environment. One of those game genres to have been adapted is traditional Indian card games. As a result, this allowed many traditional games to come back in style, for example, Chess game which became one of the most popular games to be adapted to online gaming and a mass sensation on Twitch. This also allowed for the development of new variants that offer new twists to timeless game versions.

Esports sector has developed over the past decades with highs and lows until it developed a rather balanced position in society. Twitch.tv has been a big contributor to the stability of eSports and its growth. They continue to be one major growth factor as they bring together millions of fans from around the globe. In recent years, this new kind of sport-eSports as established itself in society. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has shown this. Popular sports and motor sports used the pandemic as convenience to venture into eSports. It shows that the enormous network behind these traditional sports (companies, sport clubs, sponsors etc.) think eSports is ready for mainstream.

The digital character of eSports has shown that during this situation, it is a valuable competitive outlet with a big advantage over the traditional sports. The esports industry requires job roles far beyond the careers of professional gamers or video game developers as more and more roles keep emerging with the growth of the sector. The roles the youth can consider aside from playing professionally to go after a career in the industry are vast ranging from host, coach, admin or referee to marketing and social media manager, production crew, agent and many more.

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