Impact of Online Gaming on Youth:
A Sociological Study in Quepem Taluka, Goa

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation entitled, "Impact of Online Gaming on Youth: A Sociological Study in Quepem Taluka, Goa" is based on results of investigation carried out by me in the Sociology programme at D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioral Studies, Goa University under the supervision of Ms. Sangeeta R. Tate and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will not be responsible for the correctness of observations/experimental or other findings given the dissertation.

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COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation "**Impact of Online Gaming on Youth: A Sociological Study in Quepem Taluka, Goa**" is a Bonafede work carried out by Mr. Ruthik Velip under my supervision in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Master's degree in the Discipline of Sociology at D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioral Studies, Goa University.

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Preface

The study aims to explore the perceptions and experiences of youth engaged in online gaming and investigate the relationship between online gaming engagement, academic performance, and social behaviour. It seeks to contribute to the existing literature on online gaming by focusing on a semi-urban context and considering the cultural nuances specific to the region.

This research study was motivated by the researcher's personal interest in online gaming and its potential impacts on academic and social aspects of youth life. Drawing from the sociological imagination, the study endeavours to connect individual experiences with broader societal trends, as conceptualized by C. Wright Mills.

The methodology adopted for this study involves a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and participant observation. A sample size of 50 participants from the villages of Balli and Morpila in Quepem Taluka was selected to provide diverse perspectives on the research problem. The timeline for the research, as outlined in the Preface, was diligently followed to ensure the completion of each phase within the stipulated timeframe. The findings of this study are expected to shed light on the complex dynamics of online gaming culture among youth in Quepem Taluka, offering insights for policymakers, educators, and researchers interested in addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with online gaming engagement.

Acknowledgment

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Ruthik Velip

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

In modern times, the use of the internet has become one of the basic necessities of people. One of the recent surveys has shown that India is the second largest market in the world after China. Economic Survey 2022-23 said that internet penetration in India's rural areas has increased by 200 percent from 2015 to 2021, as opposed to within urban regions during the same period, where the penetration was 158 percent. The government ascribed the rural internet boom to its 'Digital India' Program, which was launched in 2015. (IBEF, 2023)

In addition to this, the rapid expansion of electronic sports or E-sport organised competitive video gaming has piqued the interest of researchers, educators, and policymakers. The online gaming begins to turn into quite a popular form of entertainment among youth. The next reason is that the online gaming starts to be some kind of socializing. The emergence of e-sport and its popularity raises a concern on the possible effect on the academics and social behavior of the youths. Online gaming is the act of playing video games over the internet, whereby one interacts with other players within a virtual game environment who are located in different parts of the world. With the emergence of technology and high-speed internet access, the concept of gaming has undergone a sea change. Multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA), first-person shooters (FPS), massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG), sports simulations, and other genres are all part of online gaming.

From a niche subculture, online gaming has developed to become a mainstream form of entertainment, featuring professional leagues, tournaments, and a fan base counted in the millions. Popularity has caused an increase in the participation of youth and has been

the object of debate on the impact of online gaming on the vision of life for the youth. Some have argued (Feiyue Li, 2023; Ajjar, 2023; Pampi, 2021) that online gaming may have positive consequences, from developing one's hand-eye coordination to becoming more assertive when working well in a team. Others, on the contrary, express that overinvolvement in online gaming can be damaging, though not always but mostly in the academic and social spheres.

Academically, performance is at the center of the course of youth development, simply because it determines directly the opportunities that shall be availed in their lifetime and the prospects for placement in good jobs. An over-involvement in online gaming may, therefore, raise certain issues of reduced motivation to study, time to study, sleep disturbances, or even reduced motivation overall. Others, however, are of the view that online gaming can significantly contribute to better academic performance due to improved cognitive skills and increasing development of teamwork and communication. Social behavior is one of the other very vital components of youth development. Some of the social behavior impacts of concern on online gaming include social isolation and aggression/toxicity in gaming, which may affect youth's interaction with peers offline. Contrary to this, it is believed that online gaming can actually help in developing positive social links because it offers scopes for friendship, team building, or camaraderie among the co-players. This paper sought to understand the perceptions of the players while providing a relationship between online gaming engagement, academic performance, and social behavior among youth. Finally, the nuanced factors that contribute to the impact of online gaming on young individuals, considering the great variation within games, level of engagement in games, and the personal characteristics that may have mediated these

effects, was discussed.

My interest in this topic of research was developed as I have been involved in E-gaming since childhood, mostly, my interest was in E-games rather than any physical games. I can spend hours diving into virtual worlds, teaming up with players worldwide, and facing all sorts of challenges. However, here is the thing: Beyond the fun and excitement, a bigger story unfolds. Being a gamer got me thinking. I have wondered about the impact of all this gaming on students like me, how it affects our school performance, and how we interact with others. Now, I am not just curious for the sake of it. I am wearing what I call "sociological imagination glasses." These let me see how my gaming adventures fit into the larger picture of society.

This sociological imagination idea, thought up by C. Wright Mills, pushes us to connect our personal experiences with the bigger story of society. So, as a gamer, I am right in the middle of this digital and real-life mix. It is like standing at the crossroads where games meet everyday life. The thing that got me wondering is how does online gaming impacts our academic lives and our social circles. I am not just exploring this because it is a trendy topic; it is about understanding how the choices we make, and the world around us do this fascinating dance, especially in the world of online gaming. I am curious about how technology or online gaming scenario is changing the way young people live and learn. I tried to explore the impact of online gaming on youth in Quepem Taluka.

This study focused on the area of leisure sociology., as it enabled the researcher to understand the way the youth subculture tends to present, frame, and perform their time while at leisure, playing digital gaming activities. This area covers the study of social

dynamics, cultural influences, and interpersonal interaction taking place among youth, where reference to online gaming is made special. This paper explored how online gaming shaped social relationships, identity formation, and the wider patterns of contemporary society. Utilized in the context of online gaming among the youth, sociology of leisure attempts to locate the social meaning and implications pertaining to such an ever-expanding form of gaming activities.

1.2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Human activity is moving steadily to virtual reality. More and more, people from all over the world are keen on growing fascination with e-sports. In practice, e-sport is a type of sport in which players compete using computer games. The competitive games or tournaments are held wherein the youths participate in a larger number. The competitions in games, like FIFA, Dota2, the League of Legends, and Counter-Strike, PUBG and many more to mention. The relationship between the duration of online gaming and academic performance has been a subject of inquiry.

Zeiler, et al (2021), discusses how game development in India has historically unfolded and recently evolved. Also, India, mid to late nineties, developed its mass scale computer and telephone access. The majority of Indian gamers have not played on the earlier consoles and while console gaming is gradually on the rise, PC gaming is more common and recently, the bulk of gaming in India happens on the mobile phone. As such, given the historical and sociocultural factors that are specific to the region, a different approach needs to be followed in assessing the games industry and cultures in other regions.

Chikhani, R. (2015). The Evolution of Video Games: Tracing the Roots from Arcade Gaming, Home Consoles and the Subsequent Rise of Mobile Gaming. Important events in the "Brown Box" through 1967, also serving as a popular Atari, with dual emphasis on the sociability, social dynamics, and global connectedness that have ushered in through online multiplayer gaming experiences. The author reflects back in his experiences: how inventions in technology during the early millennium years, especially the invention and introduction of the App Store in 2007, totally blew my mind with the massive waves of mobile gaming. This passage finally sums up with praise for a group presentation that does a great job, however, in detailing the history of the industry but expressing some curiosity if the nostalgic feel that the old games carried would still be there as the industry continues to grow and evolve at such a great pace.

More recent study by Gupta and Sharma (2021) also suggests that there existed a visible negative correlation between the time invested in gaming and academic attainment among Indian youth, though always regional deviations could be present, and gaming habits from one respondent to another could quite substantially differ. Examining the cultural subtleties of online gaming in India, Patel and Desai (2021) explore how the effect of games on an educational outcome could be enhanced by influencing the cultural factor. The main key findings emerging are the new perspectives of the culture that would call for interpreting relations between online gaming behaviors and academic performance.

In India, where familial and societal structures are not just given due importance, but their role is paramount, the social behavior through the medium of these games is influenced in the most convoluted manner. On the other hand, Kumar and Singh (2022) demonstrate through the conduct of a qualitative study that online gaming may be the

impetus toward new forms of socialization for the Indian youth, especially as they take the role in changing patterns of communications and social interaction either online or offline.

Dr. S. Saravana Kumar, et al (2023) discusses that the advent of gaming consoles and PC gaming has brought many youths in India on the digital gaming platform and has introduced them to E-sports. Since then, E-sports has witnessed growing popularity among Indian youth and has severely impacted their behavioural outcomes. The present study in this respect tried to understand the impact of E-sports on user behaviour. In order to fulfil the purpose of study a survey has been conducted with 124 Users of E-sports in India based on close ended structured questionnaire. The data collected were tested using SPSS tools comprised of frequency analysis, correlation, regression and ANOVA. The results of the data showed that there is significant impact of E-sports on user behavior.

Bihari et al (2023) examine the growth of online gaming into a worldwide phenomenon as astounding. With more and more young people trying to make a living as gamers, there has never been a better time to dive into the subject. Despite having the world's largest youth population and the fifth largest -economy (both promising grounds for online gaming), India's esports industry is still underdeveloped. Forty-one Indian professional gamers were interviewed to determine what factors are holding back the growth of esports in the country. Our research threw up the complex realities of the professional gamers in India and the challenges that they have had to face in taking that top step. Thematic analysis of data, therefore, brings out that the challenges of having a career in esports in India are enrooted to techno-economic, sociocultural-political, and psychological challenges. India will do well by deriving lessons from the successes elsewhere and pick up a localized approach that best fits the demographic and cultural

makeup of its people in relation to the esports industry.

Joshi and, Bagchi (2021) discusses the increase has been observed globally and has inspired many Indians to take up Esports. In recent times, the number of people taking up Esports has increased manifold. This, therefore, views the motivators and barriers the players experience in making decisions in choosing Esports as a career from the Indian context. The paper will also discuss the effect of environmental factors such as leading influence and personalities, access to technology, cultural factors, support that players get while preparing to start their journeys.

This paper used Esports Players as the subject of the survey to find out their motivators, and then tried narrowing down the most significant factors affecting them using the Chi-Square statistical technique. The researchers also tried finding the perception of people with regard to esports as a career in India. Thus, the paper examined the preferences of Indian Esports players and touches upon how players learn and adapt to esports games. It was found that players are emotionally involved in the games they played and watch various people play to enhance their skills. The esports industry in India is in its nascent stage, and people are willing to explore it as a career option and with the growth of this industry, we might be able to see newer types of jobs coming up.

Christopher Ruggles, Greg Wadley, and Martin R. Gibbs (2015) Online fan communities are an important element in the market success of a videogame, and game developers have begun to recognize the importance of fostering online communities associated with their games. One of the things researchers have looked into is the methods used by the developers to maintain and foster the online communities that form within and

around their games. The community online has been considered very important by the game developers, and in support and nurturing of the communities, they have been seen to be taking active participation. Online community building techniques identified in the study are categorized and discussed. The results represent a snapshot of current developer thinking and practice with regards to game-based online communities. The study augments existing research concerning the relationship between design features, online community and customer loyalty in new media, Internet and game-related industries.

Amit Kumar, et al (2022) mentions why do people spectate eSports in India. The authors define eSports (electronic sports) as "a form of sports where the primary aspects of the sport are facilitated by electronic systems; the input of players and teams as well as the output of the eSports system are mediated by human-computer interfaces." In more practical terms, eSports refer to competitive video gaming (broadcasted on the internet). The study employs the motivations scale for sports consumption which is one of the most widely applied measurement instruments for sports consumption in general. The questionnaire was designed and pre-tested before distributing to target respondents (n 100). The reliability and validity of the instrument both met the commonly accepted guidelines. The model was assessed first by examining its measurement model and then the structural model. The results indicate that Role-model & fan-ship, Diversion, Social Interaction about the games being played and the player fan-ship were found to positively predict eSport spectating frequency.

During recent years, eSports (electronic sports) and video game streaming have become rapidly growing forms of new media in the internet driven by the growing provenance of (online) games and online broadcasting technologies. Today, hundreds of

millions of people spectate eSports. The present investigation presents a large study on gratification-related determinants of why people spectate eSports on the internet.

For example, Gentile et al. (2017) had indicated that heavy gaming, including esports, had been associated with low academic attainment among adolescents. Moderately, the results derived from the study by Colwell and Kato (2003) had demonstrated that such moderate gaming might actually be linked to some kind of cognitive benefits, which would, for example, include problem-solving skills. Esports and Social Behavior: influences from esports on social behavior have also been something that has been observed. A study by Yee (2006) argued that the possibility of offering a sense of community and social interaction from the communities of game players. However, further studies, like that of Anderson et al. (2010), suggested that there was an inconsistency regarding the heightened aggression and antisocial behavior in only some of the gamers. Gender and Esports, Gender differences in the esports community are one of the noteworthy aspects.

The culture is bound to be gender-specific, and it will reinforce gender bias. Further, Seo (2019) presented the experiences of females participating in esports and the difficult times they have in that harsh male-dominated world. Esports and Skill Development, some research has focused on the skill development aspects of esports. Hamari et al. (2016) discussed that esports could amplify skills such as strategic thinking, teamwork, and decision-making that may have profound consequences in academic and social life. Online vs. Offline Esports Community. The paper further describes the difference in online and offline communities of esports.

However, Kim et al. (2015) found out that the offline esports events were proactive sites for social interaction and that they provided healthy social behavior, such as cooperation and communication. Much has been said about the role of parental involvement. Lee et al. (2020) further the argument that a balanced measure for parenting support, including time constraints for gaming, will be linked to more successful relations between academic achievement and social behavior of children.

The study concludes that online game playing generally enhances the social behaviors of students and carries no notable effect on academic performance. Dumrique & Castillo et al. (2018) concluded that online game participation had negative effects associated with social cognition and was linked with a misuse of academics, hence What was noted, however, is the trade-off—students into online games, but they still maintain good grades in school. Recommendations, therefore, can be drawn in connection with physical health, sportsmanship, and pro-social skills as preferable options to excessive gaming. Such collaborative work in which school administrators, teachers, and parents work together would bring the right equilibrium among students regarding their activities. When all these findings of the present study are taken together with other variable metrics on academic performance and social behavior, this study has several ramifications for understanding the intricate relationship with one another and hence independently for a more holistic approach to student academic performance and social behavior.

Amin et al. (2020) tried to throw light on the deep social impact due to COVID-19 on world society. Public health recommendations, including lockdowns and spatial distancing, have been broadly acted upon in light of the Indian government's response. They have involved a series of nationwide lockdowns that were so disruptive to daily living

and necessarily resulted in Amongst all this, the Indian gaming industry sees a surge in user engagement, as games act as a savior for people's time during the lockdown. Notably, the user base on online gaming platforms has seen an increase, more so among the 25–35 age group. Gaming has manifested as a positive outcome, contributing to the development of certain skills in cognition, but overinvolvement of gamers had been the cause of many psychosocial problems and poor academic scores, especially within the COVID-19 scenario. Factors related to problematic gaming include personality, anxiety, escapism, game genre, and even sensation-seeking behaviors. The lockdown-induced increase in gaming raised concerns about potential adverse effects on mental health. The proposed model of lifestyle balance will address strategies on how best one can balance between work and life by maintaining healthy equilibrium during the pandemic, focusing more on issues of health, issues with time spent in positive relationships and engagement in challenging activities that will create meaning and identity, all under organizing time to be able to achieve personal goals. It points to the need for well-rounded strategies to be put in place during this COVID-19 crisis by every individual in support of their bodies and minds: diversifying the day, doing something else to avoid way much time spent on video games, keeping days healthy and happy by structuring them.

Griffiths, M. D., et al. (2021). The literature searching on online gaming brings in dual-nature discussions, primarily on the positive and negative. For example, one game that has gained very high popularity in India, PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG), has been under media limelight due to many reported cases relating it to the negative psychosocial effect. Their instances range from failing in exams to such tragic outcomes as suicide and death. However, there is a lack of dedicated studies on these negative

impacts by Indian gamers, despite the media getting wide attention. It has led to concerns and calls for their ban in several Indian states following the actions taken in China. PUBG Mobile answered with a "Healthy Gaming System." These legal challenges point at the complexity of making a clear-cut prohibition of gaming and its consequences to society. In this regard, the repeat of such media attention to various games calls for a rather balanced, evidence-based approach that brings an understanding of the game's implications.

Kumar (2021) tries to analyze in his work how the Indian gaming industry has transformed over the years, turning from what was perceived as a "fool's errand" into a billion-dollar sector with over 500 million users. Despite such problems as high taxes and social stigmatization, the industry now rules the world of technology. Apart from the above, there are gamification and mobile gaming opportunities for content customization in the Indian market, where increased smartphone usage is becoming a new career. Esports: an ocean of gaming in diverse formats, now cloud gaming; it seemed like the tide was up. Investment was flowing into the country, driven by surging consumption and improved quality of products, a growing developer ecosystem, and government support. The Chinese apps ban has indirectly played a part in opening doors for Indian alternatives. The recent investments in space—be it Indian Gaming League (IGL) or Dream11, MPL, and Mobile Premier League (MPL) further pointing out the potential of the industry—make it be one of the most promising sections on the Indian tech landscape.

Beattie, A. (2021) in his study, 'From historical industry change in video games to future trends: What direction is video gaming moving in' discusses, it's a stark account of how far the industry has come: from the first pixelated screens to achieving utter, often scary, realism—all the while keeping up with ballooning development costs. Noted is the

huge size of the gaming sector, larger even than both movies and music revenues put together, and projected to grow to over \$260bn by 2025. Other entrants to the gaming sector include the tech giants like Google, Meta, and Apple, who, in their respective special ways, are working with streaming services. The new streaming takes dominance in subscriptions, reducing reliance on physical purchases. Further support through research literature for the influence of virtual reality in space, with Meta's Oculus Quest 2 cited as an example of enhanced immersion. The article talks about demographic change in gaming and smashes with a sledgehammer all the stereotypes attached to it. It has recognized the fact that eSports is commercially successful and a huge growing field of streaming game content. The analysis of these trends, therefore, could provide a postulate for the conclusion that technology companies will leverage their platforms on mobile and streaming services in the future. Overall, it paints a dynamic picture of gaming's economic importance, technological advances, and widespread appeal.

Abhijeet Singh (2020) emphasized the shift in online gaming in the 2000s. Early studies had faced instrument standardization challenges. The present study was conducted between the years 2017-2018 in Assam, India, with the purpose of finding the prevalence of online game addiction among school-attending adolescents in Assam and its association with the emotional and behavioral problems. It was cross-sectional in design and used various assessment tools to reveal the magnitude of addiction and establish significant correlations with emotional and behavioral problems.

The discussion in its later part puts these findings in the context of the globe and relates that the adverse effect of gaming addiction on mental health. Recommendations for future research and interventions are provided, acknowledging study limitations.

1.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The next study discusses the online games that the youth play, and it focuses more on how it affects the youth's academic performance and social behaviour. The following questions are raised: Differences in multifaceted effects, such as the effect of youth online gaming engagement on academic performance and social behaviour, will consider the level of engagement and the genre of gaming. Therefore, individual characteristics of gender, age, and preferences for the type of games played are mediating moderators of the intricate relationship between the engagement in online gaming and the academic outcomes it produces. Additionally, there are interplays where cultural and regional contributor's further shapes how online gaming engagement influences youth academic performance and social behaviour.

1.4. OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of the study:

i.   to understand the development of online gaming in India,

ii.   to know the corelation between online gaming and demographic factors, and;

iii. to find the impact of online gaming on youth in Quepem Taluka

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Phenomenology is a methodology that examines the direct experience of an individual based on Edmond Husserl's philosophy that the experiencing "I" forms the ground of all knowledge. This approach, in the form they developed it, shapes modern phenomenological research to understand how people develop their reality.

Phenomenology is a study on the meaning, structure, and essence of lived experiences, which involve a certain phenomenon. This is the definition through which a researcher investigates the conscious experiences of individuals, trying to bring forth and make sense of the core essence of the encounters.

The sociology of leisure is one of the major disciplines of leisure sciences that studies the various aspects of phenomena connected with leisure in a systematic and analytic way, comprising its consequences and contextual conditions (Freericks et al., 2010). It works like a sub-discipline to sociology simultaneously, which plays a fundamental role within some of the more general basic concepts of the broad discipline. In this sense, it influences all the scopes of human life, thus serving as a "spectrum discipline" (Prahl, 2002). It thus consists of explaining, within this research framework at the macro level, the "leisure society" since gender, family status, number of children, age, interests, etc. The mediation cases between a person and society at the sociology and micro level, through which behaviors in leisure by people or groups. The other differences, in relation to such features as "tourism behavior," "school recess design," and "activities in retirement homes," are all deemed to fall under the category of the sociology of leisure.

Therefore, it was a mixed-method approach, including quantitative and qualitative research. It analyzes allows an opportunity to capture holistic data on the problem under study. Thus, the sampling of the youth was done through purposive sampling., and it had diversity in age, sex, and the socioeconomic status of the sampled. I worked with two groups: one group of those who participate in online gaming and the other group of non-participants. The sample would be of considerable magnitude and thus statistically it would be significant.

In accordance to the objectives, primary as well as Secondary data was collected. The methods for the primary data included an interview schedule, questionnaires, and observation of the participants. Academic records provided an objective measure of the academic standing. In-depth interviews were the method by which access to the qualitative experiences with Online gaming was conducted. On the other hand, information on the gaming habits of the students, the time taken in online gaming, and self-report on the Performance in academic work was collected using questionnaires. The sampling was snowballing, where interviews were conducted with the respondents. in the selected areas for study. Also, the researcher utilized the Participant observation method to identify the social behaviour of selected participants and non-participants. Whereas secondary data includes books, journals, newspapers, magazines, blogs, and etc.

For this study, a sample size of 50 participants were selected to explore the impact of online gaming on youth. The sample included 25 participants engaged in online gaming and 25 who do not take part in online gaming. The balanced approach is taken at length to throw light on the prospects of differences in academic performances and social behaviors of the individuals between those engrossed in the world of online gaming and those not. The diverse perspectives from both groups contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

1.6.   DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

The universe of this study was based on the youth aged 16 to 22 in two villages of Quepem Taluka. As discussed earlier, online gaming has an impact on young generation. Here, in order to understand the impact on the youth in Quepem taluka, the researcher selected two

wards of Quepem Taluka. Quepem is a taluka situated in the South Goa district of the Indian state of Goa covers total area of 318 sq.km. As per 2011 census the total population is 14,795 with the sex ratio of 1,033 females per 1,000 males compared to the state average of 973 females per 1 000 males. where talking about the main villages of Quepem taluka are Ambaulim, Balli, Barcem, Fatorpa and Morpila as they consist over more than 2,000 population of each village.

The geography involves a lot of greenery in the landscapes, groves of coconuts, and flowing rivers that together make the place naturally beautiful. Quepem, like all other parts of Goa, has a rich cultural heritage with a fusion of Indian and Portuguese influence. The historical town churches, like that of the Quepem Church, reveal architectural wonders, which lay bare the Indo-Portuguese heritage. It provides somewhat of an interesting backdrop against which to study modern digital phenomena where online gaming intersects with traditional values and customs. The countryside is somewhat sleepy, characterized by large paddy fields, the best location, actually, for one to get good research about the impacts of online gaming among youth in a rural or semi-urban environment. Quepem has several educational institutions, including schools and colleges. The background is relevant in relation to the study of the academic performance of the youth engaged in online gaming since it even gives room for exploring to what level online gaming may be integrated into the formal setting of education.

Youth E-sports Participation: While not the urban centre in the proper sense, it is here that one would find the youth, especially between the 16-22 age group, definitely hooked to online gaming, mirroring how the culture of games spans the world. Such an opportunity finds the researchers in a semi-urban environment, which is culturally rich, to

find out how esports find its way into the lives of the youth. The knowledge of certain preferences, social dynamics, and developmental effects of esports to this age group, within a semi-urban context, contributes valuable input to the wider discourse on the influence of online gaming on the youth in different settings.

In this study, researcher selected two villages in Quepem Taluka, that is, Balli and Morpila village, Balli village is located in Quepem taluka of South Goa district in Goa. It is situated 10km away from sub-district headquarter Quepem (tehsildar office) and 16km away from district headquarters Margao. As per 2009 stats, Balli Adnem is the gram panchayat of Balli village. As per the 2011 census the male and female population is 1,458 and 1,486, Average Sex Ratio of Bali village is 1019. Morpila village is located in Quepem taluka of South Goa district in Goa, India. It is situated 19km away from sub-district headquarter Quepem (tehsildar office) and 30km away from district headquarter Margao. Morpirla is the gram panchayat of Morpila village. Morpila has a total population of 2,857 peoples, out of which male population is 1,480 while female population is 1,377. The sex ratio of Morpila village is around 973.

The sample size would be 50, comprising the participants taken from the villages of Balli and Morpila, wherein the respective village contributes an equal and balanced representation of those playing games online and not playing games online, i.e., 25 participants in each village. This represented 50 participants from each of these categories in both villages, thus creating a dual focus to help understand, with more nuances, how online games influence academic performance and social behavior in two distinct local communities.

1.7. SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The coverage of the work is very wide and covers quite a lot: the in-depth look into the effect of online gaming on the academic and social behaviors of the youth in Quepem Taluka. The following study, while focusing largely on understanding the growth of online gaming in India, will make special mention in Quepem Taluka and find out the relation that online gaming engagement maintains with several demographic dimensions. The study is aimed to find out if there are any differences in the level of engagement in gaming, genre of gaming, and individual attributes like age, gender, and socio-economic background. It is also a research area where interest is to find out the potential cultural and regional effects that may couple with the way involvement in online gaming affects youth academically and socially. Therefore, the research is based on a mixed approach to the knowledge presented by phenomenology and sociology of leisure, to offer a broad view of the topic.

The study's findings are enormous and will help educators, parents, and young people. It will add to the existing knowledge by throwing light on the impacts of online gaming on youth in a semi-urban area and provide insights to other academicians to inform their future research. Second, the results of the study will provide a basis for the development of interventions and educational programs targeted at responsible gaming with the aim of improving academic performance among youths. Third, research findings may provide information for policymakers and educators on ways to best reverse the negative effects of excessive gaming while ensuring the potential positive aspects of online gaming are realized. In addition, parents and guardians might, through it, be able to have insights into how this online gaming really affects the performances of their children in schools and

their social behaviors. Hence, necessary steps with informed concerns towards gaming and the limits of screen time. On the whole, the study is poised to benefit the youth in Quepem Taluka and beyond in their holistic development and welfare in huge ways.

1.8.   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following study, though fairly exhaustive, is not without its own set of limitations. First, the number of participants is very large. Nevertheless, they were selected very rigorously and subjected to an interview. A larger sample would find a much finer degree of the influence of online gaming on academic performance and social behavior. The relative homogeneity of the study sample in terms of geography and age might limit the generalization of the above findings to the populations of Quepem Taluka, Goa, and India. This may also be attributed to selection bias if those who chose to be a part of the study based on their gaming interests may add some form of bias to the outcome. In addition, self-report data through interviews and questionnaires may be plagued with social desirability bias and recall mistakes on the part of the subjects while recounting gaming habits and behaviors. Finally, if phenomenology does discern and hold as valid every singular experience, then it might overlook wider social and cultural factors that may be influencing behavior, vis-à-vis online gaming. Another limitation would be that of causality; the cross-sectional study did not capture all the variables that influence the outcome. There may also be difficulty in obtaining access to accurate academic records of all students, especially from various educational institutions. This thus provides another instance of how the constraints are carefully negotiated in the course of the research, since the linguistic and cultural biases represent barriers to both data collection and data interpretation, along with ethical consideration regarding the privacy and confidentiality

of the participants.

1.9. CHAPTERISATION SCHEME

Chapter 1: Introduction, serves as an introduction to the research, beginning with an exploration of the widely debated topic of online gaming and its various aspects. It then dives into the background of the study, summarizing the existing literature. In addition, it deals with research problems, methodology, a brief overview of the study site as well as the significance and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2: The Development of Online Gaming in India, and offers a historical narrative tracing the evolution of gaming platforms in the country. It examines the emergence of online gaming, current industry trends, regulatory frameworks, and future prospects. This chapter provides a contextual understanding of how online gaming has evolved in the Indian landscape.

Chapter 3: Online Games and Gamers: Insights, delves into the subtle interplay between demographic factors and the impact of online gaming. It examines differences between genders, age groups, socio-economic backgrounds, family, and peer influences on gaming habits. This chapter aims to identify key demographic variables that shape the relationship between online gaming and various outcomes among youth.

Chapter 4: Impact of Online Gaming on Youth, focuses specifically on the demographic profile of youth in the study area and their involvement in online gaming. It examines the patterns of gaming behavior, social dynamics, and youth community involvement in Quepem Taluka. By examining the local context, this chapter aims to uncover unique insights into how online gaming impacts the lives of young individuals in the region.

Chapter 5: Conclusion synthesizes findings from previous chapters and offers a summary of key findings and implications for policy, practice, and future research. It concludes with recommendations for addressing the complex interplay between online gaming, youth development, and social dynamics in Quepem Taluka and beyond.
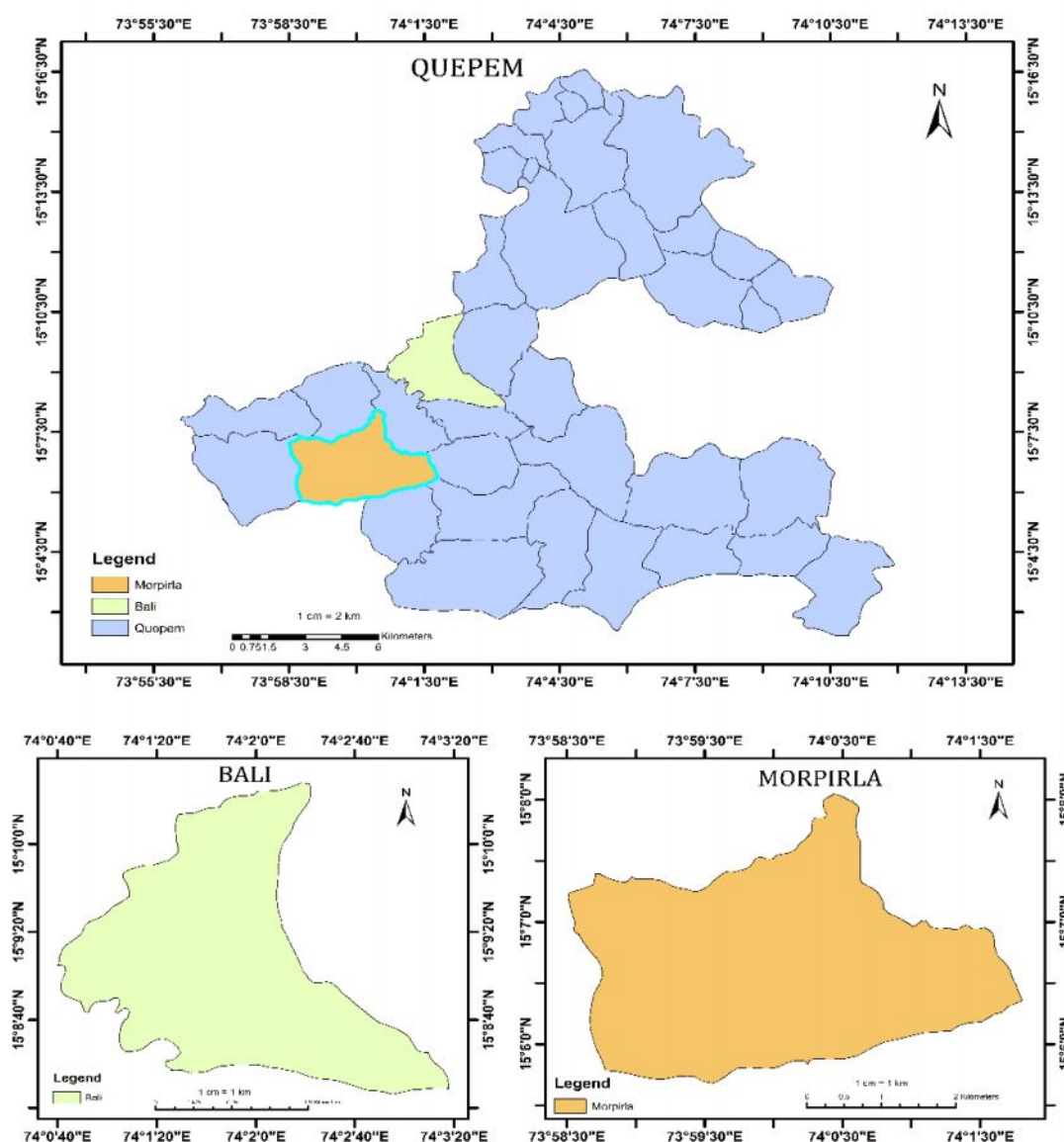
Map Of Quepem Taluka

Figure 1.1 Map of Quepem Taluka

CHAPTER 2: THE DEVELOPMENT OF ONLINE GAMING IN INDIA

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Online gaming is emerging as a critical and transformative force in the landscapes of the modern digital culture. Human interaction and entertainment for everyone of all ages are being celebrated and identified as a watershed in the history of recreational activity. With rapidly evolving technology and the internet throwing its doors open to a whole lot of people, online gaming has improved by leaps and bounds, offering a world of experiences to people whose likes and dislikes greatly differ.

Online gaming is video games playing over the internet where a player can play independently or belong to a global community of other gamers. It operates as a virtual battlefield over which players can connect, communicate, and compete among one of the most comprehensive spectra of game genres: from strategic simulations to action shooters, to immersive role-playing adventures, and much more. Sport Simulations. Online gaming is an immersive, interactive adventure, not limited to conventional game formats, but extends from the personal computer onto game consoles and even mobile devises.

The whole idea of gaming online is a place whereby it absorbs players to another realm of captivating narratives, whereby they literally get lost in another world full of imagination and excited adventures. Whether it's through chasing enchanted landscapes or colossal battles, the online game whisks a player away from reality and transposes it onto a canvas where they work their creative flair and competitive spirit. Moreover, online games are social in nature in that they provide interesting dynamics facilitating the

development of communities, nurturing of friendships, and collaborative Ness to common goals.

However, like every other form of entertainment, there are cons to online gaming. It has to be carefully negotiated in order to ensure personal balance and fulfilment from gaming. Following sections represent historic development, variation of games presents in it, social impacts, and recommendations to parents and educators in an attempt to make gaming a healthy activity.

2.2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF ONLINE GAMING

The literature on the history and significance of online gaming weaves a tapestry of perspectives and insights into the evolution and cultural impact brought on by online gaming. Like any history, online gaming is multilayered, weaved from different factors and perspectives. Often considered the grandfather of online gaming, the Internet's beginnings in its roots back to the (ARPANET) project of the late 1960s provided the very foundational facility for online gaming. Most technological change tends to be cumulative, with continuous increments rather than "Eureka." moments of change. The later, in large part, due to its use for non-military means, has greatly expanded the reach and applications of the Internet far beyond military purposes.

Taylor (2009) MUDs, a short form of multi-user dungeons, inspired by the pen-and-paper role-playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons, were an early implementation in virtual environments of users interacting and socializing. These pioneering attempts opened a way for graphical, online, persistent worlds, and by the late 1990s, games like Ultima Online solidified this trend for Massively Multiplayer Online

Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs). The place where history lines of the Internet and video gaming meet is the ground of influence of both on society and culture. Video gaming has reached participation from all demographics and grown into an industry worth multi-billion dollars. The Internet also integrated into life for many people and influenced various spheres: work, leisure, and, first of all, communication. Exemplifying the blending of the world of video gaming with the Internet, MMORPGs allow for social and interactive experiences that are very immersive sometimes even addictive. Beyond just serving as pure entertainment, online gaming has displayed greater social and cultural importance when looked at as a site for building a community and identity, and they even go towards therapeutic interventions. In this regard, scholars establish many reasons that really motivate online game engagement, including ludic (play), representation (self-expression), and communal (social interaction). Although these motivations categorize various types of behaviors of the player, they also illuminate some of the chief controversies within the research of the online game community and scholarly discourse. Online gaming, in addition, has revolutionized the reach and accessibilities of such games across time and space barriers. This changing face of engagement underscores that this is a constantly changing, dynamic, and evolving atmosphere toward online gaming as a cultural phenomenon worthy of academic scrutiny and social concern.

According to Garg (2023), the online gaming and fantasy sports industry, for a host of reasons including increased internet access and more and more digital entertainment are seeing exponential growth. However, recent events have brought to light a pressing issue within this sector: tax evasion. Raids on firms engaged in online gaming by the Income Tax Authorities have made some startling findings: clandestine activity and concealment

of income; hence, the need for scrutiny and enforcement so that tax evasion can be penalized.

In the light of the findings of the Income Tax Authorities through its investigation, the number of cases of tax evasion within the fraternity of online gaming and fantasy sports seems to be large and rampant. For instance, a raid was carried out on a gaming company and revealed that its earnings from gambling on online gaming alone have revealed a surprising amount of INR 58,000 crores over a three-year period, and it hugely remains undisclosed towards income (CBDT, 2020). Such huge tax evasion robs the government of not only essential revenues but further works to whittle down public confidence in the taxation system. These are the cases of tax evasion that have drawn the enforcement actions by the tax authorities and regulatory interventions. The raids by the Income Tax Authorities would point towards proactive action to combat evasion in the industry (CBDT, 2022). For all that, the authorities have also encouraged winners on gaming platforms to file updated tax returns and declare the earnings, while an eminent adherence to the law, which has been put down on the taxes.

2.3.   RULES AND REGULATION FOR ONLINE GAMING IN INDIA

S. Singh (2023) The Indian Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has issued new guidelines for online gaming under the already existing Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. The same shall ensure there is a balance in promoting innovation in online gaming while making room for the protection of citizens, in particular, from the illegal activities of betting and gambling. However, these rules are something of a step forward in an attempt

to regulate the burgeoning sector of online gaming, though there is a notable number of lacunae and challenges within their implementation. In this literature review, these new sets of rules will be critically app file raised, drawing from evidence in other countries and professional reflection so that suggestions on how these new rules may be effectively implemented are made. The new rules provide, among others, regulatory mechanisms pertaining to the definition of online real-money games and guidelines of certification by Self-Regulatory Bodies (SRBs).

The idea of self-regulation or co-regulation, together with the industry stakeholders and little government involvement, is very nice on paper. But the major issues of its implementation were left unattended. These include, among others, many of the procedural aspects related to the composition of SRB, the procedures for taking decisions, and the review mechanisms, which are ambiguous in nature, and could, as such, jeopardize effective regulation. In fact, even from this, it derives those subjective interpretations and, in the worst hypothesis, inefficiencies in the verification framework could not be avoided since specific criteria are missing for the assessment of the dimension of online games. Moreover, the almost permissible real-money online games highlighted in the spectrum allowed by the rules of the game hardly focus on those, with the exception of those that do not include gambling and are certified by SRBs. Nevertheless, some types of gaming that could be harmful, including loot boxes and token wagering, either remain unclear in treatment or are simply missed in the rules. That is really what may clearly point at the need for clearer regulation that would take all these factors into account and hence mitigate the risks effectively.

Secondly, the new rules are adherent to and imply very little contravention to them. Even if they encourage self-regulatory measures by the industry, they fail to provide for any mechanisms by law that can enforce and attract penalties in case of non-compliance. This brings to the fore the question of how voluntary compliance can be effective where there are no binding regulations to ensure responsibility by all the players in the gaming industry. Further attention in regard to the protection of the identified vulnerable population, especially minors, is necessary, although further measures should be taken to ensure the same. Parental involvement, along with education of the children on the subject, is particularly relevant to possible risks related to the games for children and youth. Paying attention is to be channeled into some strategies that will equip the users to be powerful and boost responsible gaming. According to these scientists, research investment is needed to understand gaming disorders and the public health implications. Lessons from other countries suggest that such standalone, prohibitive policies are limited in reducing harms related to gaming. For example, information on how fatigue systems work and comprehensive monitoring of gameplay duration would help understand what regulatory measures could be effective, particularly among young persons.

Alaukik Shrivastava (2022) the rising prominence of gaming in India, shedding light on its widespread adoption among smartphone users. It highlights the significant growth of gamers in the country and the corresponding expansion of the gaming industry. Through references to key judicial rulings such as Varun Gumber v. UT of Chandigarh and State of Andhra Pradesh v. K Satyanarayana, the article establishes the legal acceptance of skill-based games for monetary transactions in India. However, despite this legal validation, the article acknowledges the challenges posed by criticisms of gaming,

particularly concerning its association with gambling risks. It notes the lack of proactive measures from both legislative and judicial bodies to address these concerns and provide clarity on the legal status of gaming activities. Moreover, it highlights the escalating calls from various stakeholders to outright ban certain games, underscoring the urgency for regulatory intervention.

Central to the article's argument is the proposition of introducing responsible gaming principles as a framework for regulating the industry in India. It conducts a thorough analysis of responsible gaming concepts, examining different models and approaches adopted globally. By drawing from Indian organizational perspectives on gaming and referencing legal precedents, the article contextualizes the origins of responsible gaming discourse within the Indian landscape. Furthermore, the article discusses the potential application of the smart-card approach in India as a mechanism for implementing responsible gaming measures. It advocates for a comprehensive regulatory framework that aligns with responsible gaming principles while considering insights from case laws, articles, policy documents, reports, and industry expert opinions.

Varun Srikanth (2011) The landscape of internet gambling, focusing on the regulatory frameworks and challenges faced in the United States and India. The review starts by highlighting the historical context of internet gambling, noting the varied approaches taken by different countries, with some opting for regulation, while others pursue prohibitionist policies.

In the United States, the discussion revolves around the Federal Wire Act of 1961 and the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act (UIGEA) of 2006. The UIGEA's shortcomings in defining and enforcing unlawful internet gambling are emphasized, along

with jurisdictional challenges and global implications, such as international trade disputes. Shifting the focus to India, the review underscores the lack of legislative clarity regarding internet gambling. It outlines the patchwork of central and state laws governing gambling, highlighting the inadequacy of these laws in addressing online activities. The judiciary's interpretation of gambling laws further complicates matters, contributing to legal ambiguity and enforcement challenges. The review concludes by advocating for legislative reform in India to provide clarity on the legal status of internet gambling. It discusses the pros and cons of prohibition versus regulation, emphasizing the need for clear laws and regulatory mechanisms to address the complexities of online gambling effectively.

Angshuman Hazarika (2023) The fantasy gaming sector's rapid growth and substantial financial influence underscore the importance of regulatory oversight to mitigate potential risks. Despite some legislative efforts at the Union Government level, regulation primarily revolves around advertising standards and ongoing discussions for a broader regulatory framework. The Union Government has indirectly regulated fantasy gaming advertisements through the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), mandating disclaimers to prevent misleading representations of gaming as a viable income source. However, compliance remains a concern, as many operators flout guidelines, highlighting the limitations of self-regulatory mechanisms like ASCI.

Meanwhile, the NITI Aayog has initiated discussions on a regulatory framework, emphasizing the urgency of action. Although proposed measures such as self-regulatory organizations hold relevance, a more proactive government approach may be necessary to navigate the complexities of the industry effectively. On the state level, the Union

Government's evolving stance recognizes states' authority in regulating fantasy gaming but maintains ambiguity regarding the industry's categorization.

States have responded diversely, with some opting for outright bans, others pursuing regulation, and some lacking a regulatory framework altogether. Despite India's status as the largest market for fantasy gaming, regulatory gaps persist, aside from partial regulation in advertising. Given the industry's significance, urgent regulatory measures are essential to ensure accountability and safeguard public interests. In conclusion, while regulatory efforts have been initiated at both Union and state levels, the dynamic nature of the fantasy gaming industry necessitates comprehensive frameworks to address emerging challenges effectively.

2.4. RISE OF ONLINE GAMING

Mark Baxter (2011) The commercial release of video games in the 1970s marked the beginning of a transformative journey in entertainment. Initially, these games were simplistic, exemplified by titles like Pong, a rudimentary table tennis simulation that managed to sell around 19,000 units. However, over the ensuing four decades, video games evolved significantly, becoming increasingly sophisticated and diversifying across various platforms, including consoles, PCs, mobile phones, and social networks. This evolution has not only expanded the scope of gaming but has also broadened its audience base, attracting individuals from diverse demographics hungry for new and immersive experiences. The incorporation of advanced graphics, intricate storytelling, and interactive gameplay mechanics has elevated video games from mere pastimes to powerful mediums of expression and engagement. As a result of these advancements and the burgeoning

popularity of gaming, the video game industry has experienced unprecedented growth, outpacing traditional entertainment sectors such as music and film. According to the Entertainment Retailers Association (2010), the global revenues generated by the games industry have recently surpassed those of both the music and film industries.

Dewangi Sharma (2023) The surge in gaming culture in India owes much to improved broadband connectivity in Tier-II and Tier-III cities, coupled with cheaper data costs and affordable smartphones, which have made gaming more accessible to a wider audience. During the lockdown, virtual entertainment, including online game viewing and streaming, gained popularity as an alternative to OTT platforms and social media. This shift has led to significant changes across various gaming verticals, including casual gaming, web3 gaming, and esports. The FICCI-EY report of 2022 highlighted a remarkable 39 percentage increase in transaction-based game revenues compared to 2021, surpassing INR 100 billion. India has witnessed a significant rise in the number of players paying for online games, with the percentage of first-time paying users reaching 67 percentage in 2022. Remarkably, every second internet user in India is a gamer, and every third user engaging in online transactions is a paying gamer. This growth can be attributed to increased awareness and a more positive perception of online gaming.

Game developers in India are at the forefront of innovation within the gaming sector, with a primary goal of enhancing fan engagement through the development of cutting-edge technology products. These companies are not only pushing boundaries in technological advancements but also pioneering new business practices. One notable area of focus is the integration of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) technology, which aims to revolutionize gameplay mechanics. Through AR and VR, players can

immerse themselves in virtual environments, interact with objects, and engage with fellow players in shared virtual spaces. This fosters a deeper sense of connection and camaraderie among gamers, ultimately enhancing the overall gaming experience. Another significant innovation is the emergence of cloud gaming, which eliminates the need for high-end gaming hardware by allowing users to access games on various devices such as smartphones, tablets, and low-spec computers. This accessibility promotes seamless gameplay experiences and encourages players to indulge in extended gaming sessions without interruption. Furthermore, cloud gaming enables players to seamlessly switch between devices without losing their progress, further enhancing user convenience and satisfaction.

Additionally, the integration of blockchain technology is revolutionizing the gaming industry by granting players ownership of digital assets, including non-fungible tokens (NFTs), in-game items, characters, and collectibles. This advancement not only empowers players but also allows game developers to establish tokenized economies within their games. Blockchain technology also facilitates interoperability across different games and platforms, enabling players to utilize the same items across multiple gaming experiences. These fosters increased engagement and participation, ultimately driving the growth and evolution of the gaming industry in India and beyond.

Sachin Mehta (2024) Touted as one of the largest gaming countries globally, is set for substantial growth in the coming years. The Online Games market is projected to hit a revenue of US$1.47 billion by 2024, with user numbers expected to reach 186.0 million by 2027. Cloud Gaming will dominate the industry in 2024, eliminating the need for hardware and allowing remote access to games, particularly as India embraces 5G

networks. Technological advancements like AI, AR, and VR are making games more personalized and immersive, enhancing user experiences. The integration of Non-Fungible Tokens for in-game assets is revolutionizing the industry, enabling gamers to own real assets and monetize their gameplay. Moreover, AI is making online gaming safer by detecting and preventing fraudulent activities. With these advancements, 2024 promises to be a transformative year for India's gaming industry, poised to set trends globally.

Roopak Nair (2024) The advent of India's online gaming industry traces back to the early 2000s, with console and PC gaming capturing the interest of middle-income Indians. Social media in the mid-2000s introduced a wider demographic to online gaming, with titles like Farmville and Mafia Wars gaining popularity on platforms like Facebook. The rise of smartphones between 2010 and 2016 revolutionized gaming, making it accessible to a broader audience. With approximately 190 million online gamers in India, the industry is witnessing significant growth, especially among young males aged 20 to 30, who are increasingly making in-game purchases. The gaming landscape has evolved, with genres like action, adventure, arcade, card, puzzle, and sports gaining traction. Game discovery has shifted from pre-loaded games to app-based downloads and instant HTML games. The local developer ecosystem is expanding, contributing to a rise in local content. While India sees over a billion game downloads annually, the average revenue per user (ARPU) remains low compared to global counterparts. However, the increasing penetration of digital wallets and financial inclusion is expected to boost the sector's growth, with gaming projected to account for 30 percentage or more of online entertainment spending.

Amita Garg (2023) Esports, an emerging phenomenon globally, has seen rapid growth and development in India over recent years. Unlike conventional sports, esports involve organized competitive gaming, often in tournament formats, where players and teams compete to showcase their skills and win titles. Despite some confusion, esports are distinct from casual online gaming, emphasizing strategic gameplay, teamwork, and individual skill. In India, the rise of esports can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the increasing accessibility of technology, including smartphones and high-speed internet, has allowed a broader segment of the population to participate in gaming activities. Additionally, the country's young demographic, with a median age of 27.9 years in 2019, presents a fertile ground for the growth of esports, with many youths showing interest in gaming as a form of recreation and competition.

The esports ecosystem in India has witnessed a surge in professional teams, players, coaches, and tournaments across various gaming genres, including multiplayer online battle arenas, first-person shooters, and sports video games. Major esports events and leagues have garnered significant viewership, rivalling that of traditional sports tournaments. For example, the League of Legends World Championship held in 2018 saw a sold-out crowd at the Madison Square Garden, highlighting the growing popularity of esports among audiences. Financially, esports have become a lucrative industry, with substantial prize pools for tournaments and increasing revenues year-on-year. The availability of sponsorships from large companies seeking to tap into the tech-savvy youth demographic has further fuelled the growth of esports in India. However, challenges such as the lack of structured pathways for aspiring players and limited acceptance from families and society hinder its mainstream adoption as a career choice. To better understand the

motivations and preferences of Indian esports enthusiasts, research studies have been conducted, revealing insights into factors influencing participation, support received, and perceptions of esports as a career option. These studies underscore the importance of addressing cultural barriers and providing support mechanisms for aspiring esports professionals.

2.5. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Areena Parveen Ansari (2023) The virtual world of cyberspace presents both opportunities and risks, with widespread technology usage often leading to abuse. Cybercrime, a significant concern in this realm, poses threats to privacy, safety, and security. Online gaming, a prominent aspect of cyberspace, continues to evolve with advancements in technology, attracting users with enhanced experiences and products. However, the proliferation of online gaming also brings challenges, including privacy infringement and the potential for criminal activities such as gambling and cyberstalking. The application of Artificial Intelligence further complicates matters, blurring the lines between virtual and real-life experiences. In India, the existing legislative framework falls short in effectively addressing cybercrime in online gaming. There is a need for comprehensive regulations to curb malpractices and crimes in the virtual world. This paper aims to explore the phenomenon of cybercrime in online gaming, examining the adequacy of current and proposed regulatory measures in India.

Makam Ganesh Kumar (2021) This research paper delves into the regulatory framework governing online gaming in India, focusing on the industry's challenges and opportunities. As India emerges as a significant market for online gaming, there's a

pressing need to review existing regulations to ensure player protection and foster industry growth responsibly. The analysis includes an examination of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, and recent court rulings on distinguishing between games of skill and chance. Drawing from global practices, the paper assesses India's regulatory approach, highlighting areas for improvement and collaboration. It explores challenges in crafting effective regulations, such as transparency and addressing addiction concerns, and discusses the role of self-regulation and responsible gaming initiatives. The paper concludes with recommendations for policymakers, industry players, and scholars to navigate regulatory complexities and unlock the potential of India's online gaming industry.

Varun Srikanth (2011) the paper highlights the varied approaches adopted by different nations in regulating internet gambling. While some, like the United States, pursued a strict prohibitionist stance, others, such as the United Kingdom, opted for a more liberal regulatory approach. The shortcomings of the US prohibitionist policy are evident, as it failed to curb the popularity of internet gambling. In contrast, the regulatory approach, exemplified by the UK, has seen relatively better results. However, in India, there exists a significant lack of clarity regarding the legality of internet gambling. The current legislative framework is weak and outdated, compounded by a passive judiciary. This ambiguity has led to the proliferation of dubious websites, exploitation of consumers, and potential revenue losses for the state. Drawing lessons from the US experience, it is recommended that India adopts a regulatory approach to address the challenges associated with internet gambling. Parliament should consider amending the Information Technology

Act of 2000 to provide statutory clarity and accommodate provisions for internet gambling regulation.

Preethy Kathiresan (2021) The prevalence of "Problematic Internet Use" has escalated globally, especially amid the COVID-19 pandemic, accentuating the reliance on technology for various purposes. However, addressing Internet addiction poses several public health challenges. Firstly, the Internet itself acts as a risk factor due to its ability to induce dissociation, provide immediate rewards, and offer vast choices. Secondly, the lack of a standardized definition for problematic Internet use hinders accurate assessment and prevalence estimation. In India, despite a significant number of Internet users, national epidemiological studies are lacking, leading to varied prevalence rates. Additionally, there's a lack of awareness among the public and a dearth of national policies to tackle Internet addiction. Restricting Internet access for children and adolescents, who are particularly vulnerable, presents implementation challenges. Moreover, the influence of commercial interests, especially from the gaming and gambling industries, complicates regulatory efforts. Various public health initiatives globally focus on supply reduction, demand reduction, and harm reduction, akin to approaches used for substance addiction. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives varies, necessitating tailored strategies for different contexts. In India, initiatives such as counseling apps and treatment services exist, but there's a need for comprehensive programs addressing all facets of Internet addiction. Bridging these gaps requires national prevalence data, public awareness campaigns, and holistic policies targeting supply, demand, and harm reduction.

Garima Dhaka (2023) This study delves into the growing issue of online gaming addiction in India, particularly among the youth. It conducts a comprehensive examination

of the legal, psychological, and societal impacts of this phenomenon. The legal landscape surrounding online gaming addiction in India is scrutinized, revealing gaps in regulation that call for more stringent oversight. Psychological factors contributing to addiction are explored, alongside an investigation into how game design and marketing strategies influence addictive behaviors. The study also assesses the physical and mental health risks associated with online gaming addiction, underscoring the need for heightened awareness and preventive measures. Moreover, it underscores the adverse effects of addiction on social interactions and academic performance. Real-world case studies shed light on the ethical and psychological complexities of compulsive gaming. The study proposes recommendations for effective interventions, including rehabilitation and treatment protocols. It emphasizes the importance of public awareness and education through targeted campaigns and interventions to address and prevent online gaming addiction. Ultimately, the study advocates for a comprehensive strategy to tackle this issue in India, recognizing the urgency of action in addressing addiction's multifaceted impacts on individuals and society.

2.6. EARNING THROUGH ONLINE GAMING

Minseok Lee (2023) This study delves into the participation preferences of players in Play-to-Earn (PTE) games, which have garnered increasing attention for offering real-world rewards through virtual gameplay. By examining factors influencing players' decisions in these games, it enhances understanding of the interaction between virtual economies and real-world financial needs. The insights gained can inform game developers and policymakers in crafting effective strategies to support individuals exploring alternative income sources amid contemporary challenges. Utilizing the Analytic Hierarchy Process

(AHP), the study identifies 12 critical factors in PTE gameplay across three main elements: Gaming Experience, Financial Outcomes, and PTE Game Awareness. Among these, Gaming Experience emerges as the most significant factor, highlighting the importance for developers to prioritize enhancing gameplay to ensure the success and longevity of PTE games.

Fatih Sahin (2023) Both "Big Time" and "Meta Theft Auto" capitalize on the growing desire among players to earn money while gaming, presenting a lucrative business opportunity. They showcase how gaming hobbies can translate into revenue streams, attracting a wider audience. By employing blockchain technology and cryptocurrency features, they offer a sense of legitimacy and security, making them appealing to gamers. The games' diverse gameplay options cater to a broad spectrum of players, enhancing their overall appeal and serving as an effective marketing strategy. Their potential for scalability within the Play-to-Earn (P2E) segment of the gaming industry further bolsters their attractiveness to players and investors. These games represent innovative approaches to gaming by integrating P2E mechanisms, blockchain technology, and a variety of in-game professions. Marketing strategies for these games are likely to highlight potential earnings, the safety of blockchain technology, diverse gameplay experiences, industry growth, and responsible gaming practices while urging players to exercise caution and conduct research.

Isha Bihari (2023) The gaming industry in India has witnessed remarkable growth, soaring to a market worth $2.2 billion in 2021 and poised to skyrocket to $7 billion by 2026. Despite boasting the world's largest youth population and being the fifth-largest economy globally, India's gaming market share remains a modest 1percentage, with esports

comprising a mere two percentage of the gaming sector. However, India has demonstrated promise in esports, clinching a bronze at the 2018 Asian Games, where esports made its debut as a trial event. The subsequent inclusion of esports as a medal event in the 2022 Asian Games marks a significant leap forward, providing a substantial boost to India's burgeoning esports industry. Despite a burgeoning fanbase, with 17 million esports enthusiasts in 2021 and a projected 85 million by 2025, esports still largely operate underground in India, with the majority of gamers engaging in online play rather than participating in organized leagues or events. Cultural nuances, notably the deep-rooted passion for cricket, contribute to the slower adoption of esports in India's diverse landscape.

This cultural backdrop underscores the complexities inherent in introducing new forms of entertainment and competition into a society deeply entrenched in traditional pastimes. However, amidst the challenges lies a palpable potential. Indian esports talent has demonstrated prowess on the international stage, showcasing their skills and competitive spirit. The Indian contingent's participation in the 2022 Asian Games, fielding a 16-member team across five games, exemplifies this capability and signifies India's readiness to compete on a global scale. Yet, despite these promising signs, there remains a conspicuous gap in empirical research on esports within India. This void underscores the need to understand the challenges and barriers encountered by professional gamers within the Indian e-sport's ecosystem. Hence, this study aims to delve into this uncharted territory, shedding light on the hurdles faced by professional gamers in India and contributing to a deeper understanding of the dynamics shaping the country's esports landscape.

CHAPTER 3: ONLINE GAMES AND GAMERS: INSIGHTS

3.1. RESPONDENT'S INFORMATION

This study involved 50 respondents who were equally distributed between the two groups: gamers and non-gamers. 28 were male, while 22 were female, making 25 fit one of the categories and equally distributed among the gamers and non-gamers. Out of the 25 respondents who were gamers, the distribution of these fell across gender and age groups. For gender, the share of male and female respondents who were gamers falls at 17 and 8, respectively.
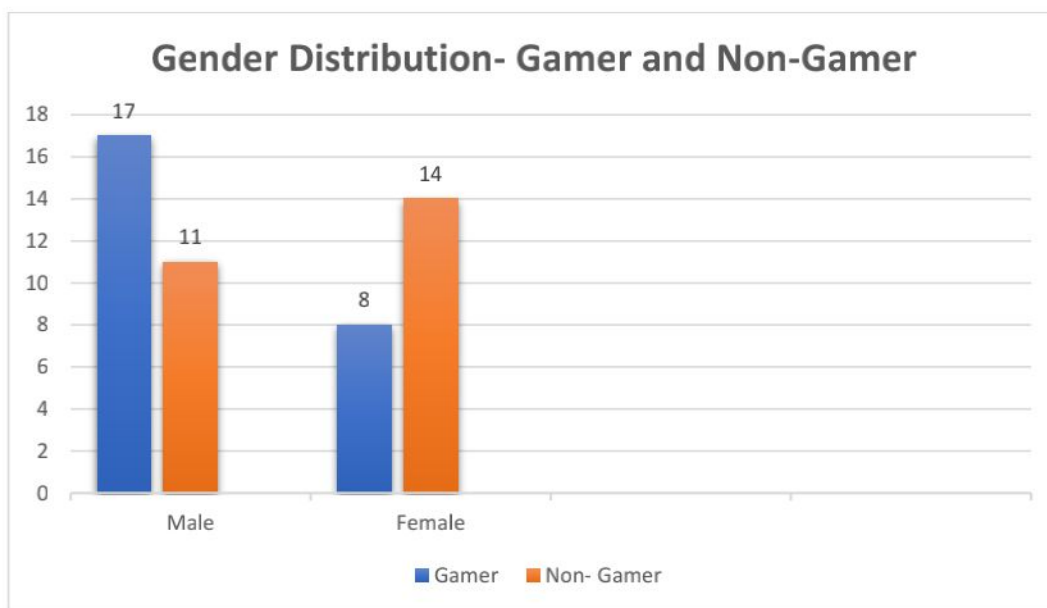

Figure: 3.1.: Gender distribution of gamers and non-gamers

The above bar graph indicates the gender distribution of gamers and non-gamers, wherein the blue bar represents gamers, and the other represents non-gamers. The Y-axis shows the number of people, while the X-axis shows gender.

3.2. DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Demographic factors include age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, marital status, etc., and are used by various researchers to understand a societal phenomenon. In my study, I have tried to focus more on age, gender, socioeconomic status, and marital status to determine the prevalence of online gaming among individuals.

1. Age

Age seemed to be a key feature in determining the preference for gaming and the time allotment to such activities. In the current study, quite a number of respondents noted the difference in the involvement in online gaming with their stage of life. School students have more time than college students to play online games, as they do not have much free time due to academic work and other work, and they aren't able to play games. This explains that the effect seems to be some kind of age group-based commitments, such as academic responsibilities. Other youth, though, who had finished their college years and had started working, say that they had lessened the gaming time because they get more work-related obligations. Certain other tendencies, like age groups, for instance, 15-16, had an inclination to be prone to playing online games more than others. On the other hand, other conflicting perspectives seemed to emerge on the gaming habits of college students, whereby some admitted that they could hardly get time for gaming because of huge academic commitments.

Respondent views brought some very distinct trends in gaming habits among people belonging to different age brackets, whereby in one of the trends, time that is dedicated to gaming is more in the younger demographics compared to their elder counterparts. This,

therefore, means that such variations in generations' gaming behaviors are actually portraying a change in preference regarding entertainment, just like any other characteristic of life. Further, the statement that "there was intensified gaming activity among students in grades seven to nine" clearly implies that amongst this lot, children were on the verge of shifting to gaming. It means the fact that there can be a certain correlation between age, academic standing, and involvement in the game. This means that there can exist a discrepancy in the share of free time, which is spent on gaming activity, in comparison with the peers at different academic standings by adolescents of the grade range specified. Such insight into gaming habits spanning different ages and, notably, educational settings provide valuable context in relation to understanding the dynamics of these recreational behaviors and the possible impact on different dimensions of individual development and social interaction. Looking further into the analysis of ages, one realizes that there are male respondents only in the age group of 16. Three respondents were under 17 years of age: two were females, and one was male. The number of 18-year-olds is six, with four males and two females. There are three of them are 19 years old: two males and one female. The category of ages 20 years and above had seven respondents, with four being male and three being female. This was the category with the closest numerical figure after computations of the other categories of ages. Whereas the 22-year-olds This demographic breakdown points out the different representation of gender and age among the respondents, who are gamers, therefore proving that there is more diversity in gaming.

2. Gender

These very dynamic roles into which perspectives of the respondent show in the gaming community in gender, where differences exist in preferences towards games and social

behavior. One large observation is the perceived difference in the tendency of male and female gamers. Males tend to hold more tendencies towards competitive gaming, while females find a refuge in gaming for its social purposes. This contrast indicates that motivations in gaming could have a potential multidimensionality structure wherein, across the genders, it might be that players are seeking different experiences and filling different social needs from their gaming interactions. Moreover, the participants showed a wide belief in the idea that males are more likely to play games than females. This related general stereotype found within the gaming culture. As evidence, a pattern of gender in levels of participation is clearly found within gaming. Of these perceived differences, however, many of the respondents thought that gender makes very little difference in the impact of online gaming on academic performance or social behavior. This, in a nutshell, is a questioning view that the impacts are inherent based on gender, and this view postulates that the influence of gaming on the outcome on the academic and social fronts of individuals crosses gender lines. This perspective very much points to the need to identify different ways in which the involvement and impacts of both genders take place among individuals in gaming activities. Such an acknowledgment by complex interactions, researchers, and policymakers may assist in better understanding how to draw an approach to address the broader implications of gaming for educational and social contexts. That would help initiate a more inclusive and just approach to gaming research and strategies of intervention. Figure 3.2. indicates that 22 of the respondents were female and 28 were male.
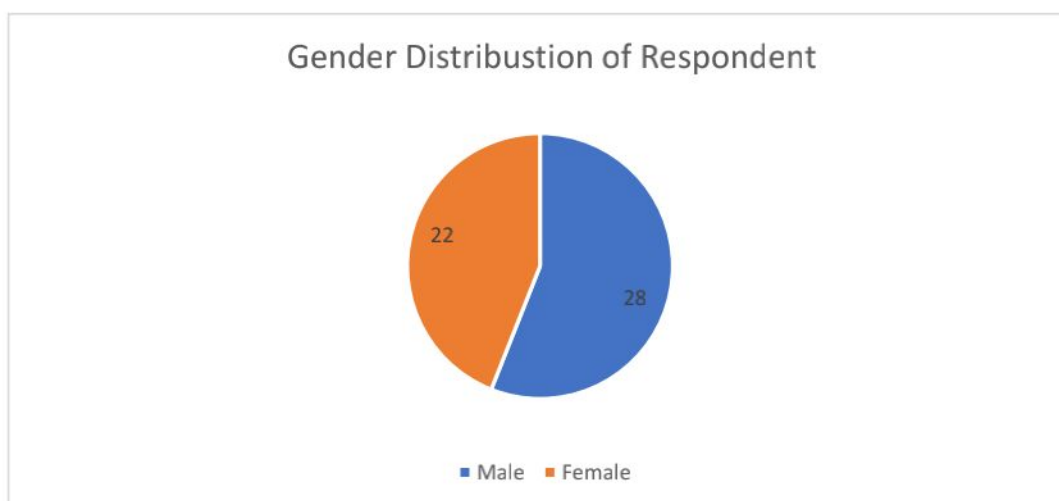
Figure 3.2. The pie chart shows the gender distribution of respondents in the survey.

3. Income Level

Occupation-wise, the major category of respondents was students, as 34 were recorded, followed by ten unemployed and only six employed. This showed a greater representation of students and unemployed youth in the sample, bringing to the fore the demographic characteristics of the population under study.

4. Social category

The study shows that 78 percent of the sample belonged to a scheduled tribe (ST), 16 percentage to a general caste, and six percent to Other Backward Classes (OBC). Notably, among the caste categories of the other, the prevalence rates were much lower, belonging to the Scheduled Tribes (ST) category.

The number of gamer respondents belonging to Scheduled Tribe (ST) was the highest, i.e., 22 or 88percentage. In this manner, the majority of the ST communities are presented in this group among the sample of gamers. On the other side, the head count of the

respondents goes to three or 12 percentage in the General Caste and, otherwise, shows very rare cases. Noteworthy is the respondent head count of zero in the Other Backward Classes (OBC) caste category in both the villages, Balli and Morpila. This was the specific demographic pattern in that these particular villages, more or less, had no OBC respondents. From this optic, the demographic pattern highlights that the caste categories and geographical locations are represented to different extents in the gaming community.

5. Education Qualification and Occupation

The occupation and qualifications of the respondents reveal a diversified profile of educational and career-oriented pursuits not only among the female respondents but also among the male respondents, of which all six respondents are students. They include two in the H.S.S.C, three in the first year of college, and one in the second year, with two others in their third year. On the male's side, there are a total of 17 respondents. For example, in 16 years old age, there are three male respondents who belong to the standard of 11th. Moving towards the category of 17 years old, one male respondent is in 12th standard. The early years of this natural history were evaluated: at the age18, four males identified; three of them had already been first-year students at the university, and one already was engaged in job activities as a data associate at a primary school after completing the 12th standard. At age 19, who are currently a first-year college student, while the other one has completed H.S.S.C. standards and is currently unemployed.

There are four male respondents: two are pursuers of third-year college, one is working as a sales executive after his 12th standard, and the remaining one is unemployed after high school. At the age of 21 years, two male respondents had graduated but were

unemployed at the moment. Lastly, at the age of 22, one male respondent had completed his graduation and was working as an accountant in a shop. This vivid overview very well explains the diversity and different stages of education and employment of the surveyed, hence clarifying diversity inside the sample group.

6. Income

The range of annual income among the respondents showed a diversified distribution in the range; the highest percentage grouped within the lower to moderate level of income bracket. Specifically, ten respondents report an income range of between 10,000 to 50,000 thousand, which means a significant portion of respondents is under modest financial circumstance.

It is in fact in the higher-income bracket of 60,000 to 90,000 thousand that only one of the ten respondents falls, indicating that only one among the few people has a slightly better earning capacity than the rest. Two of the respondents belonged to an income group of one lakh to five lakhs, which goes on to show the smaller subset who had relatively more levels of income. Notably, the majority of 12 respondents did not determine the range of the income, which possibly could be indicative of one of the reasons such as financial uncertainty or unwillingness to disclose income details. This generally shows that the distribution of respondents across the sample and probably to a higher level in the population has diverse financial situations and opportunities in them, thus mimicking a complex economic landscape within the sample group.
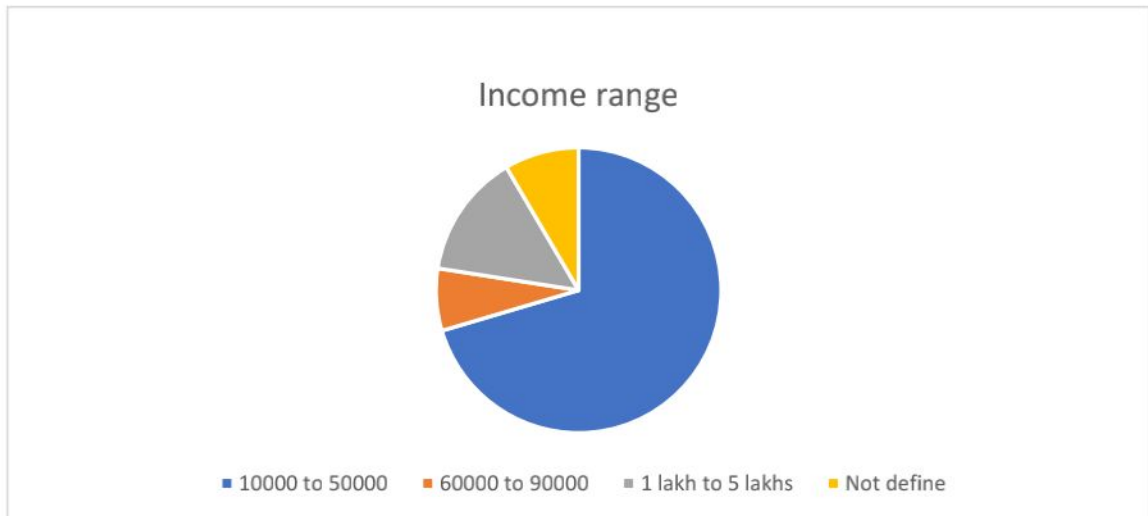
Income range

■ 10000 to 50000   ■ 60000 to 90000   ■ 1 lakh to 5 lakhs   ■ Not define

Figure: 3.3. Pie chart Shows the income range of gamers

3.2.   TYPES OF GAMES PLAYED

Online gaming surged in popularity approximately four- years ago, driven largely by the emergence of mobile gaming platforms. Prior to this, it had been gaining attraction through internet cafes, but it was the accessibility and convenience offered by smartphones that propelled its widespread adoption.

This transition marked a significant shift in the gaming landscape, making interactive entertainment more accessible to a broader audience. The widespread availability of smartphones has democratized access to gaming, particularly among the youth demographic. This accessibility, facilitated by the affordability of smartphones, has led to a significant increase in gamers, making gaming more accessible, popular, and widespread among young people. Most of the respondent says the improvement of internet infrastructure with cheap data plans and better speed had made online gaming smother and

enjoyable in the village, so this led to a significant increase in the number of gamers, and few believe that the establishment of Wi-Fi in their areas.

The dominant Mobile games in India are PUBG (BGMI), Free Fire, Call of Duty, Rummy, dream 11, and Among Us, and coming to the PC games, the Most popular are GTA and Valorant, perpetually evolving through regular updates and the introduction of new features. Due to these games gained significant popularity among youth and in India. There has been a noticeable shift from traditional PC gaming to mobile gaming due to its convenience and mobile phones are portable can carry anywhere. With the ever-increasing power and potential of smartphones, and the appearance of console-quality games in the mobile platform, it is no wonder an increasing number of gamers are considering mobile devices as their preferred gaming platforms. The fact that one can basically play games on mobile phone without the hustle of setting up Computer has really made mobile gaming such a popular pick among a wide range of gamers. This underscores one fundamental shift in the gaming landscape of the industry: the growing importance of mobile gaming has emerged as the new dominant force in the market. Especially the time covid, people prefer online games or mobile games as compared to outdoor games.

I found only four of the respondents who are following the e-sport of the PUBG (BGMI) game, and as there are perspectives on the participation of Indian gamers in international e-sport competitions, their influence on the Indian gaming community. Indian gamers can also inspire others and be a role model in great numbers at home when they display their skills and achievements in other countries. This kind of exposure has not only enhanced the reputation of Indian gaming talent but also encouraged growth and development in the local gaming scenario. It will, therefore, attract more aspirants toward

esports and hence develop and recognize the Indian esports community. And also, in-app purchases where in 44 on the respondent made in-app purchases by taking subscriptions to services like battle passes. Such kind of transactions has actually become common practice between many gamers now, since it enables much more access to content, features, and customization within their favourite games. This would often mean, then, allowing players to strengthen their experience in the game by purchasing things such as battle passes and skins that help developers stay favourable support of keeping up and updating a game they love. Such micro-transactions have been one of the major sources of revenue for most game developers, which fuel ongoing support and development to their titles. Most of this respondent make in-app purchases occasionally not in a regular basis.

3.3   EXPERIENCE

Most respondents had started playing online games for entertainment and fun, first by themselves and with friends, approximately three and six years ago. Most of these respondents started their gaming journey around four years back with the main purpose of having leisure activities and deriving happiness from the game. An interesting finding was that some of the respondents said that they were inspired to play online games when they observed their elder brothers playing, while some others mentioned that they played for entertainment only during moments of leisure. There were only a few games that were of major popularity among the villagers of Balli and Morpila. The major ones were PUBG (BGMI), Dream11, Rummy, Free Fire, A32, and Clash of Clans. This brought a lot of diversity between the two kinds of games. Generally, this light on what motivates and brings forth the preferences of the reasons the high engagement of online gaming is among

the respondent population, thus taking a form of social connection, leisure activity, and personal interest in forming gaming habits.
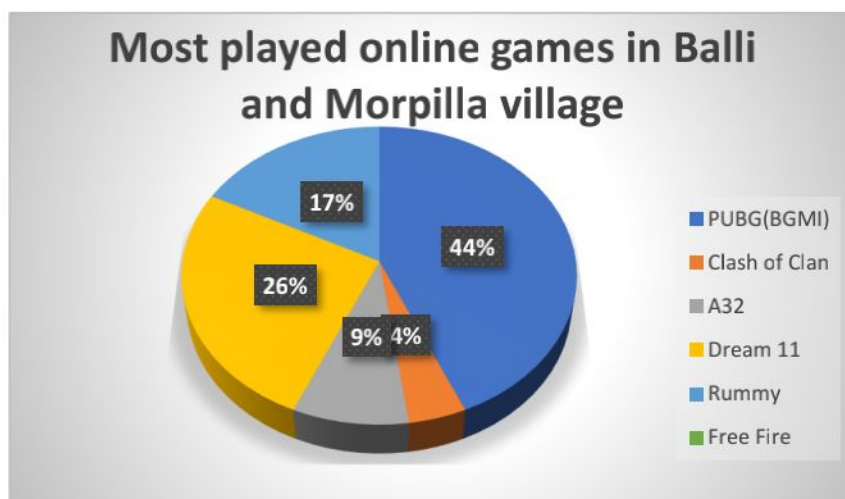

Figure: 3.4.: Most played game in Both the Village Balli and Morpila

Figure 3.4. Pie chart shows the most played game in Both the Village Balli and Morpila. All the respondents used to play using the mobile phone device only and never interacted with the preferred alternative gaming platform, such as a computer or a PlayStation. The above results further show the very vital role that is played by mobile gadgets in driving the growth of online gaming among community members. Most of the respondents also had no set time when it came to establishing the routines for online gaming. Most, in this case, played at any free time, and a good proportion of these played during the odd hours of the night. For these nocturnal sessions, the timing was not fixed, but on average, the most indulged-in game time by the respondents was found between 10 PM to 12 AM. Again, the most respondent players were found to be playing for two to four hours daily, on average. Specifically, seven respondents played for two hours daily, while six respondents played for three hours, and six others stretched theirs to be four-six hours

long. Coincidentally, only two respondents could adhere to their daily playing time of just one hour. Important aspects that the findings carry some of the important revelations are the gaming habits and the preference to play the game within the Balli and Morpila village community, which lie with games set for mobile devices and easy-to-change gaming routine patterns by the members of the community.

CHAPTER 4: IMPACT OF ONLINE GAMING ON YOUTH

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Online gaming is a digital pastime offering a platform for playing video games over the internet from a computer or a smartphone. This pastime lets you play worldwide, crossing all geographical boundaries. Be it the multiplayer games of BGMI or coming together in titles like Among Us, social interaction and fun are encouraged while playing the games. Additionally, Internet gaming opens up great opportunities to serve as a stress reducer and offer evasion from the tenseness of life for quite a few people, more than just some kind of recreation. The value is not just in the offered leisure. It offers room for learning knowledge or even sources of income. Being a member of such online gaming communities, people can obtain new skills, be aware of new strategies, or learn something connected with culture. Moreover, the advent of electronic sports, or esports, and online streaming platforms brought opportunities for professional gamers to make money out of their passion. Overall, these online games represent a vibrant and multi-faceted field of modern digital culture, bringing in both enjoyment and potential benefits for persons engaging with them.

The respondents shared their experience playing games online, which was really reflecting all kinds of responses and perspectives. Few did not experience online gaming; most did, as they would have entered this digital world. They described the experience with 'Among Us' to be not fun but said that they always had a low level of internet connectivity, and the game does not seem fun. Another respondent, having engaged in online gaming activity, can't play games due to the network problems they are encountering. Hence the

few who did enjoy the experience described it as "fun. Another respondent highlights that, in reality, games such as Candy Crush really hold a value for relief, whereby they distract and make one feel collected against life pressures. Others discuss games they have played, like PUBG, Free Fire, and Rummy, with differences against each level of satisfaction mentioned. A majority agree that it provides a means of entertainment and fun. In this light, therefore, it offers a way for relaxation, social interaction, and fun, hence its common practice by many people in search of leisure activities in this digital age.

Smartphones have completely modernized the design of online gaming; with just a mobile and at the same time, giving people opportunities to gamble on their smartphones. This flexibility and mobility of smartphones enable anybody to just decide and download any game from wherever they are, hence making online gaming more accessible than it ever could be before. Affordability in smartphones has also made their usability quite vast. Lower prices of mobile phones, in addition, make it possible for more consumers to purchase them, and this leads to the rapid expansion of the online gaming market in terms of audience. According to many, smartphones foremostly offer convenience that guarantees access to a different kind of online games, which could be played anywhere and anytime. To a point, it is this very ease of accessibility that has resulted in the explosion of online gaming's popularity, with millions of people, inclusive of small children and their families, adopting it as a favoured pastime. Further, the penetration of smartphones has contributed much toward the addressing of the social needs, like online education in times of crises, as is the case with COVID-19. While the cheap, always-on nature of smartphones has driven the rise of online gaming, it should still be noted that a substantial part of the population may be left out of the loop due to several reasons. Smartphones, in general,

have brought about access to online gaming and ushered in convenience and accessibility in digital gaming.

The fast internet speed has really changed the face of online gaming from the problems evoked by the slow internet speeds, which actually discouraged some from participating. Thus, with more access to higher-speed internet connections today, players will experience much less online game lag time in their gameplay than before. This allows a smoother game experience and better opportunities to talk to their friend while they play against others on the internet. In addition to the affordability of internet data, more people have been able to experiment with their hands in this sport. All these have made gaming even better, with this kind of fast and convenient internet, and birth gaming communities. This would mean that now more and more people can connect with each other for playing games online without any restrictions, thus developing a very healthy community of game players. However, these may reach only a few; hence, it will be necessary to educate and make the masses aware of its benefits through widespread dissemination by all available means of communication, including high-speed and affordable internet facilities to all.

The penetration of common households with full-fledged games has also come the way from physical games to online gaming. Some non-gamers are not aware of the existence of some games, whereas others say that it's easy to get everything on a computer and mobile phone. Mobile gaming has particularly made it easier for access to favourite games from anywhere, hence changes in gaming habits whereby we find members of the young generation submerged very much into online games using their mobile phones. Therefore, this has resulted in a decrease in face-to-face interaction among the youth, considering the fact that the mode of social connectivity has become more digitized and

through live interactions. The whole change in gaming, starting from physical and outdoor games, reflects a change in the pattern of entertainment and socialization happening in the digital era. Starting off on their journey of online gaming with popular mobile games like Candy Crush and Temple Run, from there eventually led them to studying online gaming communities from within with games like Clash of Clans. Although that's really come a long way, there are still many out there who are unfamiliar with the enormous opportunities, not to mention want the need for education and awareness about diversity in gaming. While most respondents said that they do not follow the esports of any game, only a few mentioned that they take interest in watching particular games just for entertainment. For example, "I like to watch Free Fire videos for entertainment. This demonstrates that, although the majority showed limited interest, it is pretty evident that esports had somewhat gained the audience's attention, especially in games like Free Fire, to give them something good to play.

The maximum number of respondents is of the view that they do not know at all about Indian gamers participating in International E-sporting competitions. The same "Do not know" has been said. However, some admitted that they were not fully aware of it. The few did not seem to be conversant well with the international e-sports competitions that had gone to compete on that level, but they seemed pretty aware of the large scale of Indian YouTubers. While the engagement of Indian gamers in world esports is not highlighted to the majority, the discrepancy finds that such a level of awareness is acknowledged to a smaller subset of respondents following content creators inside the Indian gaming community.

4.2. IMPACT OF ONLINE GAMING

4.2.1. Gaming Behaviour and Preferences

The other view held by the respondent was that online gaming has both negative and positive effects. A greater proportion of 72 percentage felt and pointed out that gaming forms a valuable source of relaxation from the manifold pressures and stresses of daily life. At the same time, part of respondents mentioned the danger of overplay, which might cause disturbances to their daily activities or lead to addiction in the worst case. None of the respondents said they already went through any negative effect from gaming, and some of them even didn't know what exactly this negative effect might be. Also noted at most times that people in classes get distracted with gaming from doing other daily activities in this COVID-19 period. This observation of most of the respondents opined towards such a possibility of facing distractions during the online class. Such a sensitive realization of the positive and negative factors of online gaming highlights the determinate importance of moderation and awareness as determinants of gaming habits in the framework of daily life.

4.2.2. Online gaming and academic performance

As a percentage, the majority of the respondents, 92percentage, perceived that playing online games did not affect their academic performance. However, a few of them, two to be specific, admitted that gaming occasionally took a toll on their studies, especially when they put gaming first before academic obligations. The respondents also mentioned instances where they found themselves playing games instead of reading their books, especially during exam periods, which translated to poor or unimproved academic performance. Besides, some respondents confessed that they were struggling with time,

their studies, and their gaming habits. While some of them had worked out schedules to balance their study and gaming time, others had stuck to the principle that they have to put more emphasis on their studies than the gaming. Half of the respondents admitted that conflicts relating to their academic commitments and online gaming activities were experienced but would eventually be settled in favour of their studies. One notable finding was that although the majority agreed that gaming did not affect the concentration of the study sessions, there were some who agreed to the negative impact of gaming on the same.

These challenges involved only the study sessions in which they felt they had gaming-related problems. But then, no respondent really owned up to skipping studies or neglecting assignment work in favour of the same. Furthermore, on the comparison of the time spent on gaming with that of studies, most of the respondents were of the opinion that when it came to the time of the exams, they did give priority to studies but managed time to both study and play the games during other times. In fact, this rather broad view of the relationship that online gaming has with academic performance is actually reflective of the mixture of leisure activities and commitments to education found among the surveyed.

None of the respondents pointed out that their grades were affected directly in a negative manner as a result of gaming. Interestingly, it is noted that their grades before and after participation in the gaming activity have remained at the same constant level. They had noticed a decline in the academic performance of other students who were actively involved in online gaming, except for the respondent himself. Whereas the respondents have not stopped participating in college events and annual functions due to their gaming. Besides, they have also taken part in sports events held in college, meaning their activity of gaming has not affected their participation in other activities. This points to a very

complex relationship between gaming and academic performance, one in which the individual experience might differ, and the effect on the grades is not fully direct.

The academic level may actually modulate the link between gaming and academic performance. For example, high school and college students may experience different impacts only because academic expectations and responsibilities lie on two different planes. Furthermore, the time spent playing games can significantly affect this relationship. If too much time is dedicated to gaming, this takes away time and focus from their academic studies, negatively impacting their performance. More importantly, the time which should be used wholly in school work is during school hours. Therefore, excessive gaming will divert the concentration that is supposed to be required for the important task of learning.

Indeed, the gaming style is not significantly influenced, as most are respondents of cultural belonging. This view may reflect the notion that gaming as an entertaining and leisure activity has passed any kind of cultural consideration. Those video games may be of interest to all without limitation, from the experiences lived to the social settings made and the challenges one has to face. Whether a player is coming from a big city or a village, in most instances, approaches to gaming are shaped by personal preferences, interest, and experience rather than culture. This playing environment is the online virtual playing environment, hosting players that come from various cultural backgrounds to be united by a common bondage that lies in treading thrilling paths of virtual exploration, competition, and camaraderie. Thus, the culture may always determine everything from language to traditions in human life. In the world of playing games, people come across a great and

valuable chance where cultural differences wash away, and they communicate with one another on one platform of joy and experience.

They further pointed out that most of the time, friends invite each other for gaming platforms. However, this has not been detrimental to their studies and social life. On being asked whether peer pressure has been put on them, relating to gaming, they categorically said that it has never, ever affected their academic work and their social lives within the context of negativity. They find pleasure in playing with friends and take it as an important part of social life. In this sense, playing games can put the player under social pressures, not that the person does not get into academic life or social relationships. In general, these experiences exhibit the balance that people can strike between playing games for leisure and having a sound academic and social life. Respondents emphasized that socio-economic status is a very complicated factor with regard to the effects of online gaming on academic performance and social behavior. Only a few of them say that socio-economic status does not come into play, but the rest who believe it does bring it out strongly. Occupations really define the behavior of gaming. An employee at a busy schedule might be deprived of ample time for playing games, yet even after school or college, the same student will be easily able to squeeze in some time for playing games. On the other hand, unemployment gives much time to gaming, which can positively affect academic and social life. This, in other words, stresses the fact that in relation to occupation and employment status, socio-economic status shapes the access and participation in online gaming to affect scholastic and social behavior later. Perceiving these dynamics is crucial to appreciating the broader impacts of gaming habits across diverse socio-economic groups and to devising strategies

that will be geared towards addressing potential disparities in academic and social outcomes.

4.2.3. Online Gaming and Social Behaviour

The majority of the respondents have been said to have experienced positive influences from online gaming on their social interactions. A good majority indicated that they could make new friends from the online gaming platform and strengthen relations with friends. The respondents further thought that they developed better skills in communication by being active participants in online gaming and, moreover, trying to communicate to strangers who would be members in their gaming communities. The respondents further felt that, with all that involvement in online gaming, the activity should also go hand in hand with offline social activities. In order to attain balance, several respondents conducted time-setting boundaries for their time of engaging in the online gaming, while others even gave more priorities to their offline social engagements. This commitment to healthful balance between online gaming and offline social life underscores that the respondents stay aware and responsible enough to keep control of social interactions within and outside the gaming environment.

Further, the respondents indicated that though they relate and socialize with other gamers on several occasions while playing games, it does not really affect their real social contact with other persons in the offline context. Most of them indicated that they respect their offline social life more than their online game interaction, possibly referring to their friendships and relations outside the gaming world. Asked if they created or belonged to any community in the gaming sphere, only a few said they created WhatsApp groups that

would have their online gaming friends to plan for the gaming sessions. Interestingly, the respondents said that there exist differences between online gaming and offline social interaction. From the above text, some of the respondents are indicating that the convenience of online communication is realized that from the point in which they can be able to converse with friends or people from afar at whatever time they want.

On the other hand, the authenticity in interaction online gave concern to others, often giving instances when they have not really been sure if the person on the other end had ever matched their online profile. To this effect, it is this juxtaposition that brings out the realization of the complex notion of social dynamics in the digital age: that, although online gaming does bring people together, it challenges one to make real friends and further challenges one to find the real identities of friends from such a virtual place.

Respondents gave a unanimous front, affirming that they have not experienced any sort of cyberbullying or toxicity behavior when gaming. Only one of the respondents agreed that whenever they have random people who are probably teammates, they give this toxic behavior, most likely responding in similar kinds of bad interactions. None of them, except for this isolated incident, mentioned that they face something serious, like fear of crowds or lack of confidence in speaking or facing problems while public speaking due to their game habits.

Interestingly, a few respondents noted that their families and friends had grown to understand the level with which they take on online gaming habits. Some friends have, in fact, even joined in the gaming sessions. While some of the respondents alluded to times when family showed some level of disapproval or frustration, no conflicts or disagreements had been reported from the gaming habits shared among these relationships. Besides, 88

percentage of the majority of the respondents reported that they never missed their gaming schedule due to cultural activities, and thus, in this way, it is proved that cultural activities have not really interfered with their participation in other life-essential activities. Broadly, these findings indicate that gaming was linked with other social and cultural activities in a harmonious and rather beneficial way among the participants.

4.2.4. Physical and Mental Health

Most of the respondents said they often remained without stress after sessions of games, which means that it had therapeutic effects on their mood and stress levels. Sometimes, however, the outcome of a disappointing game could bring down their mood. However, none gave in to sleeping at the cost of playing games. Thirteen of them were sacrificing sleep every once in a while, and 12 had said that they were making time for a good night's sleep.

Again, the respondent had reported having suffered from physical health issues that emanated directly from sitting through gaming sessions. Two respondents engaged in regular workouts for physical fitness, while 16 respondents went for outdoor activities like cricket, volleyball, and football. With great promise for physical fitness, these activities also lead to fulfilment in social interaction and camaraderie. Besides, the respondents advised that social interactions of an offline nature should be given much importance since they had emphasized that real connections played a role in sustaining proper mental well-being while gaming. The strategy shows the respondents being proactive in the management of both the physical and mental states within the context of gambling habits.

4.3. PERCEPTION OF OTHERS

The respondents have, therefore, brought out that there is a difference in opinion about the issue of online gaming by society. Perceptions from some parts of society, mostly working people, are that gaming is a form of leisure activity where one relaxes the mind after doing tough work throughout the day. On the other hand, a very common perception that marks most of the discourse on online gaming sites for college students is the opposite. Most people think online gaming is just a waste of time and express physical concerns regarding eyes, among other health hazards. This twofold perspective well mirrors the attitude toward gaming in both societies: the one revering it as a value-neutral, unharmed pastime and the other, more cautious, seeing it as harbouring potential drawbacks. Thus, the problems, which most often become a topic of debate in relation to online gaming, are arguments for and against its pros and cons, similar to the overall attitude of society towards technology and leisure, and finally towards one's quality of It helps inform discussion while understanding that the relationship between online gaming and social perception is not that cut and dried.

Around 60 percentage of the respondents believe that there are misconceptions about online gamers and their social lives. One of the perceptions is perhaps that they don't know about the kinds of career opportunities possible to be had in the gaming industry, and so have the misunderstanding that perhaps there are really no viable careers in online gaming. On the other hand, some of them feel that, in case they exist at all, misconceptions about online gaming tend to be negative in nature. On the issue of eye damage, some respondents express concern about the damage gaming can cause; not all, however, strongly agree with that. These opinions on the subject point to the impact that perception

of online gaming has on society. It is important to have informed debates about the subject and an understanding of the variety of experiences and realities of members in the gaming community.

These common stereotypes and judgments, together with different responses that these respondents give, show strategies that are exercised and adapted to different societal perceptions. Some people even admit that they were playing into stereotypes by pretending not to know about how to play the game or simply noticing the harm in it, maybe to dodge criticism or be in a discussion. Others take a stand that is neutral and just say they play games for leisure and time pass without going further to explain. Meanwhile, some, on a brighter side, counteract such stereotypes and show all the pluses of the gaming sphere. They even give personal examples of how, thanks to gaming and getting into a game community, his life became filled to the brim. These people intend to bring up the social, cognitive, and emotional benefits gaming offers in order to counter the negative perceptions about gaming and bring understanding of the gaming culture beyond face value. The overwhelming theme in those responses would have been the delicate balance between societal stereotyping and individual self-perception of what holds people back in varied ways that many people confront and put a stake in the ground for the things that interest them.

4.4. NON- GAMER PERSPECTIVE

Among the 25 respondents surveyed, there is a noticeable variation in the distribution of gamers across different age groups. Notably, there are no respondents who identify as non-gamers in the 16-year-old age group. However, in the following age bracket of 17, there is

one respondent who is a female gamer. Moving to the 18-year-old age group, there are three respondents, with two females and one male indicating their status as gamers. At age 19, there are four respondents, evenly split between two males and two females who identify as gamers. The 20-year-old age group consists of five respondents, with a majority of three males and two females reporting themselves as gamers. Similarly, at age 21, there are four respondents, with an equal distribution of two males and two females who identify as gamers. Finally, in the 22-year-old age group, there is a notable increase in the number of respondents, with a total of eight individuals, evenly divided between four males and four females who identify as gamers. This demographic breakdown highlights the varying engagement with gaming among different age groups within the sample population, reflecting the diverse interests and preferences across different stages of life.

Among the non-gamer respondents, the composition with respect to the caste category and geographical location demographically reflects a representative one. Among those, 17 are from the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category, which shows sizable representation from this group in the non-gamer sample. In addition, five respond to being classified themselves in the general category of the caste, thus representing a less but important number within the non-gamers sample. While, in Balli village, there are three respondents from the Other Backward Class (OBC) caste-category, the population in Morpila village is represented by three respondents from the Other Backward Class (OBC) caste-category. This diversity of caste and geographical composition between the non-gamers gives an interesting mix to the community, which, in turn, plays a very important role in debating the kinds of demographic characteristics of the non-gamers that need to be understood.

The qualification and occupation profiles of the non-gamer respondents were different and ranged from educational status to career for different age groups. In the age group of 17 years, one female respondent is a student studying in the 12th standard. Moving to the 18 years old category, three respondents are first-year college students, two females and a male. Four respondents are at age 19. Two are females studying at the second-year level in college; one male is studying at the college level. One male has done his 12th standard and is presently unemployed. There are five respondents when they were 20 years old, all second-year college students: three were males, and two were females. Then, there also emerged four when they were 21, with an equal number of two males and two females. Two are female respondents: one is studying, a third-year college student, while the other one is working in a showroom as a saleslady. The two male respondents are both working: one as a salesperson in a showroom and the other one is jobless. There are eight respondents whose age is 22: four are females, and four are males. One female respondent is a postgraduate student, while the other one works as a receptionist in a clinic. Two females have completed 12th standard and are unemployed for the time being. Among the male respondents in this age group, one is a post-graduate student, two are working as security guards, one is an accountant in a restaurant, and one has graduated but is now unemployed. This detailed overview highlights various educational pursuits and occupational trajectories of the non-gamer respondents, presenting a variety of pathways followed by people of this demographic group.

4.4.1. Experience of non-gamers

This means that seeing other people doing it in the same environment can bring different feelings toward different people. To some people, the act of seeing other people involved

in games can bring a vivid memory of how much fun and concentration games can offer. They might even be impelled into joining the fun and enjoying their time. Some, on the other hand, expressed fears about the possible addiction and bad effects on overdoing it, which usually makes one feel uncomfortable or disapproved of. They may even feel embarrassed in situations whereby other people even try to favour gaming activity to socializing if at all the people making such impressions already have a negative impression about the same activity. Others, on the other side, consider it quite normally and even pleasurable watching other people playing, sharing the feeling of team spirit and the level of interest in the game. For example, one person mentioned that when he saw how fun the players seemed to be having and how close they all were, it really kind of made the person feel like beginning gaming and, in fact, getting into gaming themselves. Reactions to being in an environment where others game vary, reflecting diverse attitudinal and perceptual dispositions toward online gaming. The vast majority of respondents, comprising 96percentage, reported observing people around them playing games on mobile phones.

Most respondents, who were at least either not active gamers themselves or did not have a friend or family member who is one, knew about the kind of games that the people around them usually play. The most cited battle royale games by the respondents include PUBG, Free Fire, and BGMI (Battlegrounds Mobile India). Other widely played games like Fortnite, Among Us, Dream11, Clash of Clans, GTA, and Rummy were also noted. This means that even a person who does not like gaming would be in a position to tell the kind of games his neighbors like playing. This is absolutely clear evidence that one can be in a position to see just how great the influence of such games on today's culture is.

Other respondents who used to play online games but currently don't gave reasons why they stopped. Most of them cited slow internet that compromised their gaming experiences; hence, they didn't enjoy the games. Some of the gamers spoke on how the gaming was affecting their physical health, especially due to the long hours that they spend playing, which makes them engage less on physical activities, coupled with sitting in one place for long hours that hurt their eyes. Few of them decided very firmly never to play games wasting time over the internet again, because either they had no real interest in it themselves or they had just suddenly clicked how it only adversely affected their lives. Time emerged as the major factor that led a number of respondents to stop gaming altogether, with one respondent indicating that the issue was time, as there was no time for them to play amidst the commitments. Interestingly, one of the respondents intimated that the observation of how people splash money on gaming makes him feel like it is "a total waste of time and money" and in doing so, he ponders quitting gaming altogether. These varied reasons demonstrate a complex interplay of factors that are likely to influence an individual to make a decision against not playing online games.

From these observations to those around, several patterns emerge, that include game behavior. Most importantly, it is clear that persons who have an interest in online gaming spend an awful lot of time with games they like and frequently play over hours. Many respondents are of the view that as the gamers reach home from schools or colleges, they get busy with gaming, which means that gaming is one of the major activities that they perform as part of their leisure activities. However, some noted that most gamers even spent sleep time to play games, and they would give up sleep for a game. They further noted that there is a very alarming pattern of disregard for basic needs to eat, for instance,

or sometimes for social interaction from some gamers, who seemed to be lost in their virtual worlds and therefore neglectful of everything around them. This sub-group also reported marked emotional involvement and that they were addicted to gaming. This goes to show how the intensity some gamers display can be strong. Findings of this nature, therefore, portray that one can be committed to playing online games, whereby the game usually comes first in almost all areas of their life.

4.4.2. General Perspectives

Accordingly, respondents put it in observations and perspectives that involvement in online gaming could have a vast influence on behavior and preferences. Some people feel that the kind of gaming, in this case, fully involves a person, and because some like keeping it to themselves, this leads to less communication and socialization with others. It is extreme involvement and concentration into gaming that may even bring physical discomfort, like headaches and eye strain due to long screen exposure. Moreover, many respondents raised concerns over the loss of sleep, anxiety, and depression, among others, which pointed to mental health effects. Some behaviours, on the other hand, were changed, with the gamers portraying very high levels of aggression and egocentrism, may be drawn from the confrontational and competitive environment of some of these games. Through these, they would notice the introverted behaviour in the gamers, who would want to remain quiet and not mingling with the other people.

Only a few respondents also reported that the motivation of the gamers to take part in other activities was decreasing, since the gamers are being lazier and they show less interest in activities apart from gaming. All these observations taken together thus point to

the fact that diverse, deep impacts on the behavior and preferences of those indulging in online gaming may be affected in more ways, including various aspects of physical, mental, and social well-being.

Therefore, it is clear, from the established responses, that people have seen the good and the ugly resulting from the involvement of individuals in gaming. Most of the respondents pointed out health problems, particularly stress to the eye and headaches, since one has always to look at the screen in the course of playing online games. Some of them took note of the trend whereby one only focuses on playing online games, ignores physical activities, and reduces contact with others. Further, it gave concern over the negative impacts on eyesight and the development of negative behaviors like aggression, attitude, and ego through gaming. However, there were also positive outcomes mentioned such as being able to make money through playing games and, however shocking, gaining an orientation to technology. Although all of these positives were outlined, some highlighted the negatives of reduced communication with others, mainly from over-gaming. Broadly, the observations hint that the effect of gaming may not be so evil that the good and adverse things must be accepted by the respondents. Also, all of the respondents say that online gaming affects academic performance.

Respondents generally agree with the given statement in relation to the adverse physical and mental health outcomes related to long hours of playing. Everybody agreed that online gaming in a large quantity might bring about addiction, may increase stress, and could finally lead a person towards isolation from society, from which it would be very difficult to gain mental stability. Specifically attributed to negative effects on physical health were the eyesight damage from long screen exposure and the possible ear problems

for those using earphones when gaming. Some of the respondents also mentioned the common physical discomforts: pain in the back and neck, strain in the eyes, and headaches caused by long-hour gaming. Most of them pointed out dangers from such long gaming periods, but a few said it had to be regulated. However, some respondents were not ready to accept the actual health risks of prolonged gaming. Most of the answers to this question generally tend to give awareness of possible physical and mental health hazards when gaming goes over the top.

Most respondents neither agreed nor disagreed on how age, gender, cultural background is likely to affect your involvement with online gaming. Few, on the other side, seemed to point out that peer influence would be the norm among this cohort of youths, in this case, teenagers, whom age mates would force to be part of the gaming. Few respondents also said that this might be age-based, as children are more into gaming, like PUBG and Free Fire, while a working person might be more interested in games including Rummy and Dream11.

It was not entirely across-the-board observation, though—there were also such people who didn't see any distinct relationship between demographic elements and game preference. Generally, though some respondents may have given insights based on their very own observation or experience of people around them, the general tendency was towards uncertainty or a wide range of views among individuals about how much age, gender, or cultural background could be considered responsible for gauging one's engagement with online gaming.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

My interest in researching the impact of online gaming is deeply rooted in my lifelong immersion in virtual worlds. Since childhood, I've been heavily involved in virtual gaming, dedicating countless hours to exploring these digital landscapes and interacting with players from around the globe. Through these experiences, I've encountered a myriad of challenges and adventures, each adding to the depth of my gaming journey. Yet, amidst the excitement and enjoyment, I've realized that a larger story is at play. As a dedicated gamer, I've begun to question the broader implications of my gaming habits, particularly their impact on my socialisation and academic performance compared to my peers. This introspection has evolved beyond mere curiosity; it has sparked the development of my "sociological imagination." Through this lens, I aim to examine my gaming experiences within the context of society at large. By donning my "sociological imagination glasses," I seek to understand the multifaceted role that gaming plays in my life and its broader significance within society. Through this perspective, I hope to gain insights into how my gaming experiences contribute to my personal development and how they intersect with larger societal dynamics. Ultimately, my goal is to uncover the deeper meaning behind my gaming adventures and their impact on myself and the world around me.

In the modern era, internet usage has become a fundamental necessity, with India emerging as the second-largest market globally after China. The Economic Survey of 2022-23 highlights a significant increase in rural internet penetration, attributed to the government's 'Digital India' Program. Concurrently, electronic sports (Esports) or organized competitive video gaming has garnered substantial attention from researchers, educators, and policymakers. Esports has transitioned from a niche subculture to a

mainstream form of entertainment, drawing millions of fans worldwide. The surge in online gaming popularity is multifaceted, with socialization emerging as a significant factor. Players interact within virtual environments, transcending geographical barriers. The evolution of technology and high-speed internet has transformed gaming experiences, encompassing various genres such as Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA), First-Person Shooters (FPS), and Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG).

Debate surrounds the impact of esports on youth, with differing perspectives on its effects. Proponents argue that esports can enhance hand-eye coordination, teamwork, and assertiveness, while opponent's express concerns about academic and social repercussions, citing reduced motivation to study, sleep disturbances, and increased aggression in gaming. Academic performance holds paramount importance in youth development, directly influencing future opportunities and job prospects. Over-involvement in online gaming may lead to diminished academic motivation and performance, although some argue that esports can enhance cognitive skills and teamwork, thus improving academic outcomes. Social behavior is another critical aspect of youth development, with concerns over social isolation and toxicity in gaming environments. However, online gaming also fosters positive social connections, facilitating friendships and teamwork among players. This paper aims to explore player perceptions and the relationship between online gaming engagement, academic performance, and social behavior among youth. Additionally, it will discuss nuanced factors contributing to the impact of esports on individuals, considering variations in games, engagement levels, and personal characteristics.

The literature on online gaming history provides a rich tapestry of insights into its evolution and cultural impact. It traces back to the ARPANET project, which laid the groundwork for online gaming, leading to the development of Multi-User Dungeons (MUDs) and eventually Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs) like Ultima Online. The convergence of internet and gaming has transformed both industries, giving rise to esports and providing avenues for social interaction, identity formation, and even therapeutic interventions. Despite its recreational value, online gaming has drawn attention to issues like tax evasion, prompting regulatory scrutiny. Recent findings by Income Tax Authorities reveal significant tax evasion within the online gaming industry, undermining public trust in taxation systems. The enforcement actions highlight the need for stricter regulation and enforcement mechanisms to combat tax evasion effectively. In India, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has issued new guidelines to regulate online gaming under existing rules, aiming to balance innovation with citizen protection. However, these rules face implementation challenges, including procedural ambiguities and inadequate protection for vulnerable populations like minors. Furthermore, there's a lack of legislative clarity regarding online gambling in India, with varying approaches taken by different states. The growing prominence of fantasy gaming underscores the need for comprehensive regulatory frameworks to address emerging challenges effectively. While efforts have been initiated at both the Union and state levels, there's a pressing need for proactive measures to ensure accountability and protect public interests in the dynamic landscape of online gaming.

The rise of online gaming has been a transformative journey, marked by technological advancements and cultural shifts. Initially, video games were simplistic, but

over the decades, they evolved into sophisticated mediums of expression, attracting a diverse audience. The global revenues generated by the gaming industry now surpass those of traditional entertainment sectors like music and film. In India, improved broadband connectivity and affordable smartphones have democratized gaming, leading to a surge in players across Tier-II and Tier-III cities. During the lockdown, virtual entertainment gained popularity, contributing to significant growth across various gaming verticals. Game developers in India are innovating with technologies like Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and cloud gaming, enhancing user experiences and fostering engagement. The integration of blockchain technology has revolutionized the gaming industry by granting players ownership of digital assets and establishing tokenized economies. India's online gaming market is projected to reach substantial revenue figures, with cloud gaming expected to dominate, especially with the advent of 5G networks.

Esports, an emerging phenomenon in India, has witnessed rapid growth, driven by increased technology accessibility and a young demographic. Professional esports leagues and tournaments are gaining traction, attracting significant viewership and sponsorships. However, challenges such as lack of structured pathways and societal acceptance hinder its mainstream adoption as a career choice. Regulatory frameworks governing online gaming in India are evolving but face challenges in addressing cybercrime, privacy infringement, and addiction concerns. There's a need for comprehensive regulations to ensure player protection and foster responsible growth in the industry. The Play-to-Earn (PTE) gaming segment is gaining attention, offering real-world rewards through virtual gameplay. Games like "Big Time" and "Meta Theft Auto" capitalize on this trend, showcasing innovative approaches to gaming and attracting a wider audience. Despite

India's promising potential in esports, cultural nuances and lack of empirical research pose challenges to its mainstream adoption. Understanding the dynamics shaping the Indian esports landscape is crucial for overcoming barriers and unlocking its full potential.

the study focuses on examining the impact of online gaming on youth in Quepem Taluka. The research involves 50 respondents, evenly divided between gamers and non-gamers. Demographically, a majority of the respondents belong to the Scheduled Tribe (ST), with students and unemployed individuals comprising the main occupation categories. In terms of online gaming trends, the study reveals a surge in popularity over the past few years, especially with the widespread adoption of mobile gaming platforms like PUBG (BGMI) and Free Fire. Mobile gaming has become dominant due to its accessibility and convenience, particularly amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The gaming experience of respondents indicates that most started playing for entertainment purposes, with PUBG (BGMI), Free Fire, and other mobile games being the favourites. Mobile devices are the preferred gaming platform, with gaming sessions typically lasting two-four hours daily, mostly during the late evening hours. Regarding the impact of online gaming, respondents perceive it both positively and negatively. While many view gaming as a source of relaxation, there are concerns about overplaying and its potential negative effects on academic performance. However, most respondents believe that gaming has not directly impacted their grades. Socially, online gaming has facilitated positive interactions for many respondents, allowing them to make new friends and improve communication skills. However, concerns about the authenticity of online relationships and the balance between online and offline social activities are noted. Finally, in terms of physical and mental health, gaming is generally seen as a stress reliever, although some respondents acknowledge the

risk of physical health issues from prolonged gaming sessions. Many respondents engage in outdoor activities for physical fitness and prioritize offline social interactions for mental well-being.

The study examines the influence of demographic factors, such as age, gender, academic level, and socio-economic status, on gaming habits and perceptions. It finds that age plays a significant role, with younger individuals having more time for gaming compared to older ones who face academic or work-related commitments. Gender differences are noted, with males often gravitating towards competitive gaming and females using gaming for social purposes. However, perceptions of gaming vary widely among society, with some viewing it as a leisure activity while others see it as a waste of time with potential health hazards. There are also misconceptions about gamers' social lives and career opportunities within the gaming industry. Respondents exhibit various strategies in response to societal perceptions, from countering stereotypes to remaining neutral. Overall, the study highlights the complexity of gaming habits and perceptions across different demographic groups and underscores the need for informed discussions to understand the gaming community better.

The study delves into non-gamers' perspectives regarding online gaming, examining their demographics, experiences, and general viewpoints. It reveals a varied distribution of gamers across different age groups, with engagement varying significantly among respondents. Among non-gamers, demographic representation spans different caste categories and geographical locations, offering insights into the diverse composition of this group. The educational and occupational profiles of non-gamers also vary, reflecting a range of pursuits and trajectories among individuals. Non-gamers generally perceive

online gaming as a digital pastime offering social interaction, stress relief, and potential learning opportunities. While some have experienced gaming positively, others have encountered challenges such as network issues or concerns about addiction and health impacts. Smartphone accessibility has facilitated the widespread adoption of online gaming, although some individuals may still be excluded due to various factors. The availability of high-speed internet has improved the gaming experience for many, contributing to the growth of gaming communities. However, concerns persist regarding the impact of gaming on face-to-face interaction and overall lifestyle habits. Non-gamers observe varied behaviors among gamers, including intense involvement, neglect of basic needs, and emotional attachment to gaming. Some express concerns about the negative effects of gaming on behavior and preferences, such as increased aggression and decreased motivation for other activities.

The sociological theory that relates to this study is symbolic interactionism. This theory emphasizes the importance of symbols and language in shaping social interaction and the construction of meaning. In the context of the impact of online gaming on youth in Quepem Taluka, symbolic interactionism provides a framework for understanding how individuals interpret and assign meaning to their gaming experiences within their social context.

Symbolic interactionism highlights the role of symbols, such as gaming platforms, avatars, and virtual communities, in shaping individuals' interactions and perceptions. It explores how these symbols are created, negotiated, and transformed through social interaction. In the study, the researchers examine how online gaming serves as a symbolic space where youth engage in socialization, identity formation, and communication with

others. They also investigate how gaming behaviors and perceptions are influenced by societal norms, cultural values, and individual experiences. Moreover, symbolic interactionism underscores the importance of studying the subjective meanings that individuals attribute to their actions and experiences. Through qualitative methods such as interviews and participant observation, the researchers aim to uncover the nuanced meanings and interpretations that youth associate with online gaming. They seek to understand how gaming influences their sense of self, social relationships, and academic performance, as well as how they navigate societal expectations and stereotypes related to gaming.

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APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR GAMER RESPONDENTS

Dear Respondent,

I want to express my sincere gratitude for your willingness to be part of my research on the "Impact of Online Gaming on Youth: A Sociological Study with Reference to Quepem Taluka". Your participation in this interview is crucial for gaining valuable insights into the subject. I assure you that all information shared during the interview will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. Your time and input are highly appreciated, and they will contribute significantly to the success of this study.

Ruthik Velip

MA II- Student,

Sociology Programme, DDKSSSBS, Goa University

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Section I: Respondent's Information

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Gender:
4. Qualification:
5. Religion:
6. Caste:
7. Occupation:
8. Income:
9. Total family members:
10. Disability, if any:
11. Marital Status:

Section II: General Information on Online Gaming

1. How would you describe the early days of online gaming in terms of popularity and accessibility?

2. How has the adoption of smartphones influenced the accessibility and popularity of online gaming?

3. How has the improvement in internet infrastructure, particularly the availability of high-speed internet and cheaper data, contributed to the growth of online gaming in your village and shaped the overall gaming landscape?

4. What are the dominant games in India, and how have they evolved over time, including any specific games that have gained significant popularity among Indian gamers?

5. How has the gaming scenario evolved, from traditional Games to PCs, mobile devices gaming?

6. You follow E-sport? If yes, how has the participation of Indian gamers in international esports competitions influenced the local gaming scene?

7. Have you made any in-app purchases and subscription services? (Yes/No)

Section III:

3.1. Experience

1. Can you tell me about your experience with online gaming?

   - How did you get into online gaming?

   - How long have you been playing online games?

   - What motivates you to play the game?

2. What type of games do you play, and on what platforms or devices do you typically engage in gaming?

3. Can you describe your online gaming routine, including the number of hours per day you typically spend on gaming?

Section IV: Impact of Online Gaming

4.1. Gaming Behaviour and Preferences

1. Have you ever experienced negative or positive consequences as a result of gaming? If so, can you elaborate?

2. How does gaming affect your daily routine and responsibilities? **4.2. Online Gaming and Academic Performance**

1. Has online gaming affected your academic performance? If yes, how?

2. How do you manage your time between academics and gaming?

   - Is there any specific routine? (Yes/ No)

3. Have you experienced conflicts between gaming and school/college work?

4. Do you think gaming affects your concentration during your studies? (Yes/No)

5. Have you ever skipped studying or assignments due to gaming? (Yes/No)

6. Have you ever experienced challenges in balancing academics and gaming? If yes, how did you manage to cope?

7. Have you noticed any changes in your grades since you started gaming?

8. What was your grade in an institution before being involved in gaming and after being involved in the game?

9. Can you share your observations or experiences regarding any noticeable changes in the academic performance of students who actively engage in online gaming?

10. Did online gaming stop you from taking part in the annual functions/events in college?

11. Were you participating in sports events organised by college? Does online gaming impact it? (yes/no)

4.3. Online Gaming and Social Behaviour

1. How does online gaming influence your social interactions and relationships?

2. How do you balance your online gaming activities with your offline social life?

3. Can you describe the social aspect of online gaming for you?

    - Do you interact with other players while gaming? How has it influenced your social behavior?

    - Have you made friends through online gaming? How do these relationships impact your offline social life?

    - Is there any community as such that you have joined? (Yes/No)

    - Have you formed any online communities or friendships through gaming?

4. Do you notice any differences in your social interactions offline versus online gaming environments?

    - Do you think gaming has affected your relationships with family and friends? (yes/no)

    - Have you experienced any negative emotions related to gaming? (yes/no)

5. Have you ever encountered cyberbullying or toxic behavior while gaming? If so, how did you handle it?

6. Have you ever faced any negative social consequences due to your involvement in online gaming? (Fear of crowd, lack of confidence while talking, and public speaking etc) (yes/no)

7. How do your family and friends come to understand your online gaming habits?

8. Have any conflicts or disagreements related to your gaming habits? (yes/no)

9. Have you skipped any cultural activity due to gaming? (yes/no)

4.4. Physical and Mental Health

1. How do you feel after a gaming session? Does it affect your mood? If yes, then in what ways?

2. Do you have to skip or delay your sleep for gaming? (Yes/No)

3. Do you experience any physical health issues related to prolonged gaming sessions?

4. How do you manage your physical well-being while gaming?

5. Have you ever experienced stress, anxiety, or any other mental health issues related to online gaming? (yes/no)

6. How do you cope with the potential negative impacts on mental health?

Part V: Demographic Factors

5.1.

1. How do you think your age influences your engagement with online gaming?

2. Have you observed any differences in the gaming habits of individuals of different age groups?

3. Do you think there are gender-based differences in the impact of online gaming on academic performance or social behavior? If yes then what are they?

4. Do you think the relationship between online gaming and academic performance varies based on academic level? (Yes/No)

5. Do you think the duration of gaming experience affects how it influences academic performance and social behavior? (Yes/No)

6. How does your cultural background influence your approach to online gaming?

7. Have you experienced peer pressure related to gaming, and how does it impact your academic and social life?

8. Do you believe your socioeconomic status plays a role in the relationship between online gaming and academic performance/social behavior? (Yes/No)

Section VI: Perceptions of Others

1. How do you think society views online gaming and its impact on social behavior?

2. Do you believe there are any misconceptions about online gamers and their social lives?

3. How do you respond to stereotypes or judgments about online gamers?

<u>Section V: Respondent's View</u>

1. How do you become aware the relationship between online gaming and academic performance?

2. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding this topic?

Thank you for participation.

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR NON-GAMER RESPONDENTS

Dear Respondent,

I want to express my sincere gratitude for your willingness to be part of my research on the "Impact of Online Gaming on Youth: A Sociological Study with Reference to Quepem Taluka". Your participation in this interview is crucial for gaining valuable insights into the subject. I assure you that all information shared during the interview will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. Your time and input are highly appreciated, and they will contribute significantly to the success of this study.

Ruthik Velip

MA II- Student,

Sociology Programme, DDKSSSBS, Goa University

Section I: Respondent's Information

12. Name: 13. Age:

14. Gender: 15. Qualification:

16. Religion: 17. Caste:

18. Occupation: 19. Income:

20. Total family members: 21. Disability, if any:

22. Marital Status:

Section II: General Information

1. How would you describe your familiarity with online gaming?

2. Have you ever tried playing an online game? If yes, could you briefly describe the experience?

3. From your perspective, how has the adoption of smartphones influenced the accessibility and popularity of online gaming?

4. In your opinion, what role has the availability of high-speed internet played in shaping the gaming scenario, considering factors like cheaper internet data?

5. Even if you don't play, are you familiar with specific games that have gained significant popularity among Indian gamers?

6. From your perspective, how has the gaming scenario evolved, moving from traditional games to PCs and mobile devices gaming?

7. What is your view on the participation of Indian gamers in international esports competitions? Are aware of it?

Section III: General Experience

1. While you might not actively play online games, have you ever been in an environment where others around you were playing, and how did that make you feel?

2. Do you follow esports, and if yes, is there a particular game you find interesting to watch?

3. What platforms or devices do you see people around you using for gaming?

4. Even if you don't play, are you aware of the types of games people in your circle tend to play?

5. If you were playing online games before then why you left playing? Reason?

6. Can you describe what you observe about the online gaming routines of those around you?

Section IV: General Perspectives

1. In your view, how does online gaming influence the behavior and preferences of those who engage in it?

2. Even if you don't play, have you ever observed any positive or negative consequences experienced by people due to their involvement in gaming?

3. Do you think online gaming has any impact on academic performance?

4. Do you believe there are any physical or mental health implications associated with prolonged gaming sessions?

5. How do you think age, gender, and cultural background may influence one's engagement with online gaming?

Section V: Perceptions of Others

1. How do you believe society views online gaming and its impact on social behavior, even if you personally don't play?

2. How do you generally respond to judgments about online gamers, considering you're not actively involved in gaming?

Section VI: Final Thoughts

1. Given your perspective, how do you perceive the relationship between online gaming and academic performance?

2. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your observations or experiences related to online gaming?

Thank you for your participation.