A Fusion of Gambling into Gaming Industry its Impact of Technological Adoption Prospects and Policies on Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract

"A Sound mind in a sound body" is the Greek proverb that has an emphasis on the sports and education. Games are for the purpose of "Edutainment" which is a part of cognitive development from the childhood. Games existed around the world from times immemorial. Many games originated from many places in different forms. Games are played by everybody of all ages. Once the games were played between family and friends as now transformed into online games where a gamer can play online with strangers. As Technology is advancing gaming had advanced into Gaming industry. Gaming which was indoor which includes board games and outdoor games have now become online. Gaming impacts on several Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) like SDG 1, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 8, SDG 9 and SDG 16. But as the gaming industry is developing many of the games are high definition, realistic with a fusion of technologies like AR, VR and MR but more than developing cognitive abilities and strategies current generation gaming is getting confused with gambling into gaming and has been encouraging fantasy, violence, blood and gore, vulgarity, spending money, betting, tournaments and many other issues by impacting in an adverse effects on the persons and society. This paper covers an evolution and transformation of gaming, its impact on the current generation, necessary policies and preventive measures to be taken for the Sustainable Development as the future of the person and growth of the nation depends on the current and future generations.

Key words – *Games, Technology, Edutainment, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Gambling, Adverse effects*

Methodology

A combination of Doctrinal and Qualitative methodology with observation method had been used in this research paper.

Hypothesis

The game and gambling were totally different from each other. Games were healthy, had a healthy competition but from time to time as technology is advancing the game and gambling are now merging which can lead to more challenges. The life of a gamer should be fun learning and life of a gambler is stressful and addictive and destructive but now that things have been merging a gamer is becoming more or less a gambler. The Sustainability of gamer, gaming company and development is based on the compliance of rules and unless the gaming companies adhere to both legal and ethical principals the sustainability can not be achieved.

Introduction

Games were played from childhood between the family, then with friends and then with family and friends at different occasions. Every game not only India, but also in the world had a meaning and purpose which is for the physical and mental development. Games were played both indoor and outdoor depending upon the climatic conditions. Now the online games have taken the role that can be played ubiquitous. In India the evolution of Gaming in India dates back to the Period of Rig Vedic period between 1500-1000 BC/BCE. The disadvantages of playing with dice which is about gambling had been written in detail in Book 10 Hymn 34 titled "Dice" clearly indicates the life of a gambler. It indicates the psychology of a gambler, how he lost the hope of his family, driven his wife out and lost everything for the luck of the dice.

There were many games that were played in our epics few of them are totally based on luck, few are based on luck but has a meaning, few games are based on cognitive abilities of a player, there were wide varieties of board games to outdoor games where India was the Origin to many of the games which the current generation is not even aware of. Games such as Pachasi which was well-known game played during the Mahabharat itself explains the disadvantages of gambling. Moksha patam well known as Snakes and Ladders which is not only played with dice and has snakes and ladders but has a meaning for each cell, every ladder has importance and a reflection of why the snake gulps and how the life turns at that point of time. Games used to be thought provoking and had moral values, games are designed to teach life to the youngsters while every game reflects physical or mental skill from childhood which develops cognitive thinking and physical development. Apart from the traditional Indian games the evolution of Gaming in India

started with the British Invasion, as the Cricket craze increased the cricket betting also made its way into the nation. The street fights, the bird and animal fights, where horse racing was not in the ambit of gaming act. The Gambling came into force with a primary focus on whether it is a "A Game of Skill" or "A Game of Chance". Unlike developed countries there were not many casinos in India, the first casino was established in Goa in 1999, later in Sikkim and Daman and Diu. There are many states that had change the gaming laws from time to time.

Analysis

Gaming is now an industry, just like any company the gaming companies are also growing. Just like any company manufactures a product and users purchase it, it is same in this company. Even after a game has been purchased, though it is a full product, the gamers use it as a raw material for their earning – Earning here is both edutainment and money.

Types of Gamers –

1. *Hard core gamer* – They play on and on, day and night to win over the game and dominate everybody else. They play and keep on playing, they know and understand the strategy of winning. Most hard-core gamers are the real gamers who play for money than for fun or change.
2. *Casual Gamers* – I heard about this game, let me play for fun is the attitude of the casual gamer. Major number of players are usually casual gamers.
3. *Mobile gamers* – The mobile gamers usually play on their mobiles, there are both casual and hardcore gamers but they all play on mobiles, it can be either an online game or from the App downloaded.
4. *Online gamer* - The online gamers play both on their mobile and PCs, there are both casual and hardcore gamers, they play observe, learn, gain skills and play to win over the game. They play for longer hours interacting with the other players as well.
5. *Observer* – Usually when an elder sibling is playing the younger one watch how they are playing even though the younger sibling knows how to play. These observers are the gamers who know but watch tournaments and other gaming events to gain more knowledge and to know and understand the strategies of the other players.
6. *The Armchair General* – These gamers play to win, win others with strategies, strategies that no one can even think of. These gamers are well versed in the game, speed, spontaneous, multi-tasking are their core skills. Unlike the mobile and online players these players first have to setup their gaming desks.

Setup –

These gamers spend money in mobile devices, gaming consoles, hand held devices etc are essential for a rookie but for a real gamer there are multiple things that the gamer needs to purchase such as a Wi-Fi Router, headset with mic, ergonomic chair, stereos set, monitor with a latest graphic card, ergonomic keyboard and mouse, gaming controller, webcam and many more which costs around 24,000 INR depending on the capacity of the gamer. The advanced version of gaming room setup as under the gamer varies depending on their ability to spend. They usually play and cast the same on the internet in websites like Loco Gaming or on Facebook, or YouTube where other players get to see and learn from their game play. Increase in number of users and subscribers fetch money as well

Bartle's Taxonomy of SEAK

Socializers who play and have fun time with friends or make friends and seek for making friendships while playing, explorers are the ones who go deep into the game and go where no other player had gone and do no other players would think. They least believe

in failure and are constantly exploring for opportunities. Achievers are good at game and are core for their capabilities winning is their attitude and they know that winning is both rewarding and make them popular. They are good at personal best scores, points, achievements get unlocked for them. They are the perfect gamers. Killers, are the gamers who play player vs player, primary focus is to beat the other player to win. They are aggressive both at the play and in the attitude and don't like to lose, they need to win the game at all the cost and can do anything to do so. In gaming world this kind of game play is not encouraged yet there are the role play games where killing is an essential part and these games and gaming companies are encouraging this mode of gaming mindset in the gamers.

Personal choice or Peer pressure

Peer pressure is a social mirror where a friend of colleague invites another friend or colleague to play a game. It might be a party game in Xbox to an online game of Ludo to GTA. The first timers have no clue and try to either learn or quit, but once they quit, they will be outcasted from the other plays and cannot be involved in their casual talks too so the pressure is being built. This is a million-dollar question is the player playing at his/her own choice or being dragged into the game because of the peer pressure, played and got addicted and could not come out but win it.

Addiction to Aggression

A player plays a game to relieve from stress, for fun, to learn, to explore, to compete – All these are normal these days. But when a player plays the game, thinks about it, always thinks about the game plan, discuss with friends about the moves, keeps himself/herself away from their normal hobbies and involves themselves more and more into gaming, spend less time in studies or at work and find ways to play the game is addiction. When a player gets involved so much and the teammate or the opponent changes the game play or does something unexpected the player's addiction turns into aggression and shows anger, frustration and even curses the other players which might lead to blocking such player in the game.

SDG 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Freemium and Premium are two versions of games. The games that are available for fee are freemium and paid versions are premium. A game can be downloaded free for sure but almost any and every game has "In-app Purchases. While playing there are several levels that a player need to cross and many challenges, to save life or to have another chance, to purchase equipment or for anything important to do in the game – coins, diamonds, gems and whatever the name is given in the game, one must have it to go to play and move to the next level. The player has to either watch an Ad or buy it with money. The more the money a player can invest the faster and easier it becomes to the player. Instead of using the cognitive skills, the player tends to spend more and more. There were many young adults and students during 2018 till 2020 who played PUBG with their real money. There were many members who emptied their parents' bank balance to purchase arms and ammunition to play the game. This is where most of the addicted players spend more money with an ambition not only to gain what is lost but to gain even more. SDG 1 – Target 1.5 is important to reduce the exposure and vulnerability extreme events related to economic and social disasters.

SDG 3 – Good Health and Well being

There are many concerning health issues such as excessive use can cause eye irritation, increased use can lead to addiction which may lead to mental health issues, increased persistence becomes addiction, increases jealousy. A game usually encourages team play and also encourages sportive spirit but the games are not designed to encourage the same, if a person is winning or the team mate is losing the gamers can abuse, curse and even the chat rooms has an option to throw eggs, tomatoes, gifts, flower bouquets at the player in a game like Uno which is a game under the grey area between the game of skill and chance. Which impacts on mental health of the player. SDG 3.4 which is to promote mental health and 3.4.2 to reduce suicide mortality rate are very important targets to reduce and streamline the effects of online gaming.

SDG 4 – Quality Education

The first part of education is to teaching is play school which is intended to teach a kid with game and play and it is where "Edutainment" starts. Gaming is a part of life, starting from the ancient Indian civilization to the modern way of living, games are played on different occasions and for different purposes. Game starts all the way from Kindergarten kids' who sing and play rhymes or folklores like "Ring – A- Ring O' Roses" which itself has various versions and lyrics from country to country, this reveals the culture and customs. Life of a kid starts with rhymes and action games which reflects the history and culture of the country. At different ages and different seasons our ancestors used to play different kinds of games which had a lot of meaning. There were many Indian games which originated in India and got transformed due to invasions and have changed so much that the current generation is living in a myth that we are playing foreign games. Though games and gambling were prevalent in the olden days, games were encouraged and prevailed in the society, whereas gambling was never encouraged neither in the family nor the society. As the technology is advancing so is the gaming industry. But now-a-days more than fun there is frustration that's developing due to online gaming, where majority of the gaming companies fused gaming and gambling together. It is not an impossible yet a difficult task to curtail this new normality to an older healthy version of gaming which improves the cognitive and overall development. SDG Target 4.4 increases relevant skills, technical, vocational skills. Coding has been included in NEP 2020 in India which improves 4.4.1 which is important for decent employment. Target 4.7 focuses on promotion of culture, peace and non-violent

lifestyle. Target 4.b focuses on development of ICT for development in multiple aspects. ICT in Gaming and gaming industry can create many opportunities but must not create any adverse effects on the community.

SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth –

As education, technology, innovation is increasing day by day and gaming had developed into gaming industry. Just like any software company there are staff who create, play test and repeat such as Game designers, writer, producer, developers, audio engineers, animators, artists, translators, testers, professional gamers, Technical Support specialist etc., There are jobs where the players become testers, they get to test the game and find bugs (errors) even before it is released into the market. The company makes the games, releases it, makes new upgrades from time to time in the name of patches and releases the games. Employees of one country can be hired by the other country there by the GDP of the nation also increases. As the downloads increases, players play the game and have their games casted live on social media and gets subscribers. Each gaming company competes that it has more players and downloads compared to the other games. There are games that encourage vulgarity, violence, gore, nudity sexuality and challenges which encourage sexuality and vulgarity.

Gaming Tournaments

The first video game tournament was held in 1972 to play Spacewar in Stanford University. The tournaments were not popular in India till 2016. No later than 2008, the use of smartphones became normal all over the world and in India as well with in no time. Google, Facebook have separate apps for games. The usage was normal, the games like PUBG were played even before 2020 but the Lockdown due to COVID-19 caused gaming and betting season grow even more, there were tournaments yet students used to have limitation on screen time but due to online classes, the students of all ages, specially teens and college students started having more and more screen time. As there is nowhere to go and nothing to do everybody started to explore multiple game during this phase. The start of IPL season staged a betting platform for both the websites and for the players. The gaming tournament was not popular in India till 2016, later because of IPL the gaming tournament craze had started, this craze turned in to an addiction due to PUBG. SDG Target 8.2 is accomplished as the annual GDP is increasing. But there is a need to take care that gaming industry should not lead to a proportion of young adults not in education, employment or training as majority of them are busy playing online games. There had been some games like PUBG that were banned in SAARC countries but there are websites and Apps services which uses the APK links to share the game with the other players. In such cases it is very important to note that having vast knowledge must be helpful but not become deceitful and destructive.

SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

For any game there should be some innovation, strategy, logic, a story line or just a new idea, the right objective behind creating the game, talented employees and infrastructure with comprises of multiple factors like PC, consoles, gears, different operating systems to test if it is interoperable. All the objects must come together to create a good gaming industry. Even for the gamer, it is not only the game but the gear is also a requirement, more than that the device and to make the device work efficiently it should be advanced and operative, for speed and consistency the internet must be strong. One might think it is one company that is growing but it is a symbiotic relationship where all these domains and different industries grow together. It is very important to keep in mind Target 9.1 where the infrastructure should support the human well-being. Target 9.b which supports the domestic technology where the native games can be brought before the current generation.

SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutes

The Britishers introduced the game of Cricket and horse racing to Indians, later the craze for cricket also increased and in 1864 the cricket betting had started in India. The British gambling acts along with *The Public Gambling Act, 1867* were in effect during that time. After India became Independent the Public Gambling Act, 1867 with few amendments came into existence and different states adopted their own gambling laws. There are gaming laws that treat gambling, poker, horse racing, casinos, lotteries, bingo and betting as gaming laws which primarily focuses on gambling laws. There were instances where the world especially the SAARC countries looked into and banned some games from time to time. It is pertinent to observe that gaming and gambling are two different concepts and in India we have Gambling Act but not gaming act, as gambling is now getting fused with gaming and the money spent or gained in these games are now in a *grey area* as this fusion of Game of skill and chance is becoming a loophole for many website and tournament organizers. Few people announce the same on social media, so public and the organizers are aware of it but the legislature, executive and judiciary have to make relevant policies, steps to enforce the policies appropriately.

According to Gaming acts the game of skill like chess cannot be considered to be played for money. But the fact is that the tournament organizers entice a player by showing a good prize money or bonus which is illegal. It is important to take a note of a judgement by the Apex court *In 2015, the Supreme Court in D Krishna Kumar v. State of Andhra Pradesh (2002) and Cinema Cultural Centre, Jubilee Hills v. Commissioner of Police (2002) pronounced that "rummy as a game of skill, reaffirming the principle laid down decades ago.* This judgement was regarding Rummy whether it is a game of skill or game of chance. But clubs can still be prosecuted if they host high-stakes games of rummy. This means that playing rummy is legal in Andhra Pradesh, clubs that host high stakes games face legal action from police if discovered." But websites like Rummy circle and similar websites play for money which do not come under the purview of jurisdiction as there is no law prescribed to prosecute such websites.

Conclusion

The Latin term "Nullum crimen sine lege" which means "no penalty without a law" is pertinent to be observed with regards to the gaming laws both at international and national level. All the gaming/gambling laws were enacted around 1860's before IT Revolution. The usage of mobile phones started in 1990's and usage of smart phones started after the year 2000. After COVID 19 pandemic situation where the SAARC as well as the Indian states has experienced a surge of online games, tournaments, flow of money have banned few games. Though a few states in India made amended the state laws in accordance with the technological ambit and have banned the online gambling, they were not revamped in accordance to the practical and technological perspective. As soon as the IPL season started the betting has reached its peak gaming websites like Dream 11 (fantasy) have clubbed the game and gambling under one roof. There was a petition filed against the website but the contents of the complaint were not formulated as both the petitioner, police and the lawyers of the petitioner were not versed with the advancements and the court ruled the judgment in favour of the website as there was a grey areas between gaming and gambling laws. This judgement had impacted on surge of several similar websites. These websites and Apps have advanced to a stage where the Ads in the TV have been telecasted, though betting and gambling are illegal. There are multiple questions that arises here such as how the IPL betting has been organized, how online gaming tournament have been organized and no one is able to question the legalities. How the apps and banks are transferring amounts online without questioning the gamers nor the organizers. Why is that any action has not been taken to curb the situation. Current generation is very well aware of the phrase "ignorantia juris non-excusat" yet no one is implying as the precise answer for all the issues is that there is no such governing law to administer online gaming and gambling as law. It is the need of the hour to bring online gaming laws to have a sustainable development.

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