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## INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic evolution of global gaming, esports has emerged as a transformative phenomenon, blurring the lines between leisure and competition. Scholars like Sebastian Block and Florian Haack [1] have explored this shift, capturing the essence of the global gaming narrative. Within Bangladesh, a nation embracing digitalization, esports is undergoing a notable transformation from a casual hobby to a serious pursuit. Drawing insights from esports matrices [2] and diverse definitions [3], this paper seeks to unravel the factors driving esports' popularity locally, assess its economic viability, and understand its perception as a viable career choice. By examining motivations globally through the lens of Guo Freeman and Donghee Yvette Wohn [3] and Juho Hamari and Max Sjöblom [4], we bridge the global-local gap, shedding light on the Sebastian Block and Florian Haack journey from gaming as a pastime to a promising career path in the dynamic realm of esports.

### 1.1 The Evolution of Gaming: A Lens on the Past and Present

Globally, the trajectory of gaming has undergone a profound evolution, transitioning from a simple recreational activity to a sophisticated and competitive pursuit known as esports. Scholars such as Sebastian Block and Florian Haack [1] have extensively studied this global shift, elucidating the multifaceted dimensions of the burgeoning esports industry. The narrative extends beyond entertainment, intertwining technology, skill, and community engagement worldwide. In Bangladesh, a nation embracing digital advancements, the evolution of gaming mirrors the global trend but also carries distinct local nuances. As the gaming landscape transforms from casual leisure to a more structured and competitive endeavour, Bangladesh's esports scene emerges as an integral part of this evolution, reflecting the country's unique cultural and technological context. Exploring this evolution provides a comprehensive perspective on the past and present of gaming, encompassing both the global and local dynamics that shape the esports phenomenon.

### 1.2 The Narrative of Competitive Gaming

Internationally, the narrative of competitive gaming, or esports, unfolds as a compelling story that transcends conventional perceptions of gaming. Scholars like Guo Freeman and Donghee Yvette Wohn [3] delve into diverse perspectives, enriching our understanding of how esports is defined and conceptualized. This global narrative is characterized by the fusion of technology, strategic skill, and a vibrant community that elevates gaming into a competitive and spectator sport. In Bangladesh, this narrative takes on a unique hue within the cultural and technological context of the nation. Once considered a form of entertainment, Esports has evolved into a serious and structured pursuit, mirroring the global narrative. As competitive gaming gains prominence locally, it intertwines with Bangladesh's gaming community, weaving a distinctive storyline reflective of the country's cultural ethos and technological landscape. Examining the narrative of competitive gaming provides insights into how global trends influence local dynamics, shaping the esports landscape in universal and region-specific ways.

### 1.3 Unveiling Esports in Bangladesh

In the context of Bangladesh, the emergence of esports signifies a transformative paradigm within the nation's gaming ecosystem. As digital technologies increasingly integrate into everyday life, esports have transcended their status as a mere pastime, unveiling themselves as serious and structured pursuits. This unveiling reflects the technological advancements and the evolving preferences and aspirations of Bangladesh's gaming community. Esports in Bangladesh is becoming a focal point where passion, skill, and competitive spirit converge, mirroring global trends while also embodying the distinct cultural nuances of the nation. Unravelling the layers of esports in Bangladesh involves exploring how this phenomenon has grown beyond entertainment to become a dynamic force, influencing not just the gaming landscape but also shaping new narratives of competition, community, and career aspirations in the digital age.

### 1.4 Research Objectives

#### 1.4.1 What factors contribute to the growing popularity of eSports within the gaming community in Bangladesh?

In recent years, the exponential rise in the popularity of eSports within Bangladesh has captivated an expanding audience fueled by the pervasive influence of social media, increased internet accessibility, and the widespread availability of affordable gaming equipment. This surge has prompted many individuals, particularly the youth demographic, to engage with eSports as casual gamers or fervent spectators of competitive gaming events. Statistics from eSports organizations and recent surveys underscore the notable interest and participation at both local and international levels. Local eSports competitions, organized by communities and gaming cafes, have seen a substantial uptick in participation, indicating the escalating involvement of grassroots players. Simultaneously, international eSports competitions, prominently featuring popular games like Dota 2, PUBG Mobile, and Free Fire, have garnered significant attention and enthusiasm from the Bangladeshi audience. This research dissects the factors contributing to this remarkable surge in eSports popularity within the Bangladeshi gaming community, shedding light on the dynamics fueling this cultural and technological phenomenon.

#### 1.4.2 How economically viable are eSports in Bangladesh?

The financial ecosystem for players and teams in the Bangladesh eSports industry is diverse. Funding for eSports events primarily comes from sponsors, gaming companies, and, occasionally, government organizations. Recognizing the marketing potential, local brands contribute, leading to more frequent and larger-scale competitions. For players, income varies based on success and popularity. Top-tier professionals excel internationally, earning from tournaments, sponsorships by global gaming brands, and ad-supported streaming. However, most players earn modestly from local events, small sponsorships, and fan support through donations. This paper explores the factors influencing income dynamics in Bangladesh's eSports, shedding light on financial sustainability across different levels of the gaming community.

#### 1.4.3 How is eSports viewed as a career choice in Bangladesh?

Recently, the perspective on eSports as a career option in Bangladesh has undergone a noteworthy transformation. Once considered a hobby or pastime, eSports has earned recognition as a competitive and potentially lucrative industry, altering societal perceptions. This shift is attributable to the surging popularity of eSports both nationally and internationally, where professional success and financial security are attainable for players. Family support, a crucial factor influencing career choices, has started to evolve positively in the context of eSports. While parents and guardians might have been apprehensive about gaming careers in the past, the increasing recognition and respect for eSports have started to lead families to view it as a valid alternative for their children's future. The industry's growing acceptability is further propelled by the emergence of regional eSports organizations, the success of strong players at various levels, and its official recognition as a sport by national sports authorities. This paper aims to delve into the factors shaping the view of eSports as a career choice in Bangladesh, offering insights into the evolving dynamics of this industry in the local context.

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#### Our Contribution:

Our research presents a comprehensive exploration of the esports landscape in Bangladesh, contributing significant insights into its evolution, economic dynamics, and the changing perception of esports as a viable career choice. By synthesizing global and local perspectives, we bridge the gap between universal trends and the unique cultural and technological context of Bangladesh, unraveling the layers of esports from a casual pastime to a structured and competitive pursuit. This research holds particular relevance for the Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) community, providing valuable input for researchers and practitioners. It offers nuanced understandings for designing user-centric esports platforms, exploring the sociotechnical aspects of esports in digital societies, and examining human factors in technology-mediated career choices. By delving into the local dynamics of esports, our work enriches the HCI knowledge base, guiding future research endeavors and informing the design of technologies that resonate with diverse cultural contexts within the esports landscape.

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