# FANTASY GAMING AND IT'S INFLUENCE ON SPORTS ENGAGEMENT, SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND GAMBLING BEHAVIOR.

# <sup>1</sup>Dr. Purvi Dipen Derashri, <sup>2</sup> Devesh Ashok Sharma, <sup>3</sup> Sharon Thankachan John, <sup>4</sup>Viraj Pithva, <sup>5</sup>Riya Shah, <sup>6</sup>Raj Shah, <sup>7</sup>Chestha Solanki, <sup>8</sup>Dhavalsinh Sisodiya

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, Parul University, <u>purvi.derashri@gmail.com</u>
 <sup>2</sup>Research Scholar, Parul University, <u>deveshsharma0110@gmail.com</u>,
 <sup>3</sup>Research Scholar, Parul University <u>sharonthankachanjohn@gmail.com</u>
 <sup>4</sup>Research Scholar, Parul University <u>virajpithwa3@gmail.com</u>
 <sup>5</sup>Research Scholar, Parul University <u>shahriya0924@gmail.com</u>
 <sup>6</sup>Research Scholar, Parul University <u>rajshah70547@gmail.com</u>
 <sup>7</sup>Research Scholar, Parul University <u>solankichestha@gmail.com</u>
 <sup>8</sup>Research Scholar, Parul University dhavalsisodiya9586@gmail.com

#### Abstract

This comprehensive research delves into the intricate relationship between fantasy gaming and its impact on sports engagement, skill development, and gambling behavior. Over the past decade, fantasy gaming has evolved into a captivating phenomenon, bridging the virtual and real worlds. This research becomes increasingly relevant as the popularity of fantasy gaming continues to surge, necessitating an exploration of its multifaceted effects on individuals and society. The genesis of fantasy gaming can be traced back to the mid-20th century, but its resurgence in the digital age, facilitated by the internet and technological advancements, has propelled it from a niche hobby to a mainstream cultural phenomenon. Unlike traditional spectatorship, fantasy gaming actively engages participants by transforming them into team managers, fostering a deeper connection with sports events. The virtual teams created by participants reflect their strategic acumen, knowledge of player statistics, and understanding of the dynamic nature of sports. Fantasy sports leagues encompass a diverse range of popular professional leagues, allowing enthusiasts to tailor their experiences based on personal preferences. This diversity contributes to the expansion of fantasy gaming beyond the traditional confines of sports fandom. However, the study goes beyond the surface allure of fantasy gaming, aiming to understand its potential impact on skill development, sports engagement, and gambling behavior. Fantasy gaming is posited as a means of skill development, requiring participants to analyze player performances, study team dynamics, and make strategic decisions. This analytical and decision-making process enhances cognitive skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and strategic planning. Furthermore, the iterative nature of fantasy sports leagues fosters commitment and consistency, promoting the development of discipline and time-management skills. The social dimension of fantasy gaming is also explored, with many leagues involving interactions that contribute to the formation of virtual communities. To contextualize the relationship between fantasy gaming and gambling behavior, the research draws a distinction between the two. Gambling involves wagering money



on uncertain outcomes, often relying on chance, while fantasy gaming, particularly fantasy sports, is considered a skill-based form of entertainment. The convergence of these two realms prompts a closer examination of the psychological dimensions involved, exploring the factors that contribute to the allure of fantasy gaming and its potential impact on participants' behaviors. The research is underpinned by an extensive review of existing literature, incorporating insights from various scholars globally. Studies conducted in India and internationally have scrutinized the growth of the fantasy gaming industry, its legal and regulatory challenges, and the evolving dynamics of daily fantasy sports platforms. The research provides a comprehensive understanding of the industry's socioeconomic implications, potential for substantial growth, and the need for effective regulatory frameworks. Methodologically the study encompasses a vast population, representing rural and urban residents in Gujarat, and employs a purposive sampling method. Data is collected through a well-structured questionnaire distributed via Google Documents. Statistical analyses, including chi-square tests, are conducted to investigate the relationships between fantasy gaming and sports engagement, skill development, and gambling behavior. The findings reveal a nuanced landscape. While statistical tests fail to establish a significant impact on sports engagement, skill development, or gambling behavior, participants exhibit strategic thinking, report improvements in financial management skills, and adhere to responsible gaming practices. The study concludes by emphasizing the importance of these nuanced insights, contributing to a holistic understanding of the multifaceted relationship between fantasy gaming and individual behaviors.

Keywords: Fantasy Sports, Gaming, Gambling

#### **Introduction**

The transformative impact of fantasy gaming on the realms of sports engagement, skill development, and gambling behavior is a subject of increasing significance in contemporary society. In the past decade, the landscape of gaming has evolved considerably, and fantasy gaming has emerged as a captivating phenomenon that transcends traditional boundaries. This burgeoning form of entertainment, situated at the confluence of the virtual and the real, has captivated millions worldwide, offering a unique blend of strategic decision-making, team management, and statistical analysis within a simulated sports environment. As the popularity of fantasy gaming continues to surge, it becomes imperative to investigate the multifaceted effects it exerts on individuals and society at large. The genesis of fantasy gaming can be traced back to the mid-20th century, but it has experienced a remarkable resurgence in the digital age. The advent of the internet, coupled with advancements in technology, has facilitated the widespread accessibility and popularity of fantasy sports leagues. Participants are no longer confined to pen-and-paper drafts; instead, they engage in real-time, interactive platforms that seamlessly integrate statistical updates, player news, and social connectivity. Fantasy gaming has evolved from a niche hobby to a mainstream cultural phenomenon, attracting participants from diverse demographics and sporting interests. At the heart of fantasy gaming lies the immersive experience it offers participants. Unlike traditional spectatorship, where fans merely observe the outcomes of sporting events, fantasy gamers actively engage with sports by assuming the roles of team managers. This active involvement fosters a



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deeper connection with the games and players, transforming passive consumers into active contributors to the sports narrative. The virtual teams created by participants are a reflection of their strategic acumen, knowledge of player statistics, and understanding of the dynamic nature of sports. Fantasy sports leagues span a wide spectrum, encompassing popular professional leagues such as the National Football League (NFL), National Basketball Association (NBA), Major League Baseball (MLB), and others. The diversity of sports available for fantasy gaming allows enthusiasts to tailor their experiences based on personal preferences, expanding the reach of fantasy gaming beyond the traditional confines of sports fandom. One of the intriguing aspects of fantasy gaming is its potential to contribute to skill development in a range of areas. Participants in fantasy sports leagues are required to analyze player performances, study team dynamics, and make strategic decisions based on a myriad of factors. This analytical and decision-making process enhances cognitive skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and strategic planning. Moreover over, the constant need for updated information on player injuries, team dynamics, and performance statistics encourages participants to develop research skills and stay abreast of realworld sporting events. The iterative nature of fantasy sports leagues, often spanning an entire season, fosters a sense of commitment and consistency, promoting the development of discipline and time-management skills. Beyond cognitive and informational skills, fantasy gaming also cultivates social skills. Many fantasy leagues involve interactions with fellow participants, whether through online forums, chat features, or face-to-face interactions in local leagues. This social dimension of fantasy gaming contributes to the formation of virtual communities, where participants share insights, strategies, and experiences, fostering a sense of camaraderie and collaboration.

#### What is Fantasy sports?

In the realm of gambling and legal gambling, fantasy games offer a combination of strategy, risk and entertainment. Participants are immersed in a virtual world where they create a dream team of athletes and characters who compete against each other based on real sporting events or fictional characters. Whether it's managing an all-star lineup in fantasy football or strategizing to conquer fictional lands in online betting tournaments, fantasy games appeal to a wide range of enthusiasts. It requires careful decision making, statistical analysis, and a thorough understanding of the game and its mechanics beyond simple luck. Combining excitement and skill, fantasy games are a dynamic outlet for thrill-seekers and seasoned competitors to showcase their skills in the digital world. Although they operate within a legal framework, fantasy games are indicative of the growing landscape of interactive entertainment and official games.

#### Fantasy sport and gambling

Fantasy games and games of chance are exciting places where imagination and chance collide, providing participants with an exciting experience that combines strategy and risk. In the world of fantasy games, players create a virtual team or brand and participate in competitions based on real sporting events or hypothetical situations, when betting is introduced as part of betting on the



outcome to increase funds and increase happiness. The appeal lies in making strategic decisions and anticipating unpredictable outcomes, fueling the adrenaline rush that accompanies every bet. Whether predicting an athlete's performance in a fantasy sports league or predicting the outcome of a virtual battle in an online game, the element of unpredictability drives engagement and excitement. However, the combination of fantasy games and gambling also raises concerns about compulsive gambling and the potential for addiction. It is important that participants approach these activities with caution and flexibility and enjoy having fun, and understand the importance of maintaining balance and control to enjoy the gaming experience.

#### **Research on Fantasy Sports in Context of Gambling**

Much research has been conducted on gambling and fantasy gambling in India and internationally, reflecting different perspectives and concerns. Experts examined the industry and its growth, particularly in the Indian context, examining issues ranging from legal compliance, implications for addiction, legal practices to change in technology to sports and gambling activities. The research examines the differences between games of skill and games of chance, supports selfregulation, and explores the dynamics of everyday fantasy playgrounds like Dream11. The study highlights the industry and its socio-economic impact, growth rate and the need for an effective regulatory framework. Internationally, the research explored the historical development of fantasy sports, its relationship to fan engagement, and the ongoing debate surrounding the classification of fantasy sports as a virtual game or a game of chance. This extensive study provides a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted landscape of fantasy and gambling, providing valuable information for policy makers, industry stakeholders and academics. Through his editorial research, he provides an overview of fantasy sports in India and covers key areas such as: industry size, impact on youth, legal issues and changes in consumer behavior towards digital platforms. Researchers explore the differences between games of skill and games of chance. And gambling; Advice on self-regulation of online gambling. The dynamics of the daily fantasy sports platform coexisting with Dream11 show the balance between skill and risk. The study also highlights the transformative impact of technology on sports and games and shows the potential for growth. The legal framework, the regulatory approach, the industry and the ability to attract foreign investment will be discussed. Overall, this study provides insight into the diverse landscape of fantasy sports and recognizes the need for effective regulation and understanding of the relationship between technology and participation.

#### Literature:

#### • Agam Gupta, Yash Khandelwal, Manish K. Singh, Ashutosh Singla (2022)

In this study we test whether skill or chance plays the dominant role for winners. Additionally, our observations reveal that actual teams tend to excel in games with a significant skill gap between the two teams. In this study, our objective is to investigate the fundamental question of whether these games should be classified as games of skill or games of chance. Although every sport



inherently involves an element of chance, legal experts are keen on determining the dominant factor, whether it is skill or chance, in these games.

## • Dinesh kumar and Shaijala Grover (2022)

This study, a first of its kind in India, employs statistical hypotheses techniques used on actual, anonymized fantasy sports data to test the above skill dominance tests. Dream11, the biggest Fantasy Sports company in India, agreed to share historical, anonymized data for the purpose of this study. Furthermore, individuals who evaluate players past performance when selecting their Captain and Vice-Captain tend to achieve higher average scores than their other players. This learning effect underscores the significant skill enhancement over time, distinguishing it as a hallmark of skill-based games rather than games of chance.

## • Joseph D. O'Brien, James P. Gleeson, David J. P. O'Sullivan 2021

This study investigates the skill-versus-luck dynamics in Fantasy Premier League, an online fantasy soccer platform, utilizing a substantial dataset comprising around one million contestants. The analysis reveals a correlation in managers' ranks across multiple seasons, suggesting a discernible pattern in their performance. Success in the game is attributed primarily to long-term planning and consistently sound decision-making amid the inherent uncertainties of the contests. Notably, the emergence of 'template' teams indicates a form of herding dynamics, suggesting shared strategic considerations and a consensus among successful managers on key decision points over an extended period. The study underscores the importance of strategic foresight and skillful decision-making in navigating the complex and unpredictable landscape of fantasy sports competitions.

# • Shalu Misra and Anuj Saxena 2022

The article highlights the transformative impact of technology on sports and gaming activities in India, emphasizing the shift from traditional, real-life settings to the digital realm. It underscores the significant growth potential in India's consumer digital economy, projected to surge from USD 85 billion in 2020 to USD 800 billion in 2030. The widespread accessibility of affordable broadband and mobile data has facilitated the adoption of digital platforms, leading to millions of Indians, spanning various age groups, embracing the internet and smartphones. Within this digital landscape, sports and gaming activities are undergoing a notable transformation, with the online mobile gaming market in India experiencing exponential growth. The surge is attributed, in part, to the country's younger, more educated population with increased online connectivity and disposable incomes, factors expected to drive discretionary spending in the realm of digital sports and gaming.

# • Yatan Pal Singh Balhara, Swarndeep Singh (2022)

This Research provides an overview of the current state of fantasy sports and its potential implications concerning addictive behaviors, especially within diagnostic frameworks.



Additionally, it offers recommendations pertaining to fantasy sports, considering public health and clinical perspectives in the Indian context. Obtaining a conclusive answer to this question is challenging due to the scarcity of research in this area. The available research is not only limited in terms of quantity but is also predominantly confined to Western countries.

#### **Research Methodology:**

#### **Data Collection**:

In the context of this study, population refers to the total population of rural and urban residents of Gujarat. This general section provides a general understanding of the research topic. This study uses a purposive sampling technique, which involves selecting participants who meet specific study criteria. In this case, the focus is on individuals who participate in fantasy sports. This method allows meaningful and meaningful research to be conducted on the desired population...

#### Tool:

The primary data collection method is through a well-structured questionnaire. This method is chosen for its efficiency and cost-effectiveness, given the wide geographical distribution of respondents. The questionnaire allows for the collection of standardized data, ensuring consistency and comparability. The questionnaire, used as the data collection instrument, is thoughtfully designed to solicit responses from participants. Google Documents is utilized as the platform for distributing the questionnaire, facilitating an efficient and structured data collection process. Subsequently, Microsoft Excel & SPSS is employed to compile and analyze descriptive statistics and conduct parametric analyses.

#### **Research Objective:**

#### **Primary:**

• To assess the influence of fantasy gaming on sports engagement, skill development, and gambling behavior among users.

#### Sub Objectives:

- To assess the influence of fantasy gaming on sports engagement.
- To assess the influence of fantasy gaming on skill development.
- To assess the influence of fantasy gaming on gambling behavior among users.
- To assess the frequency of participation in sports-related activities or events among fantasy sports gamers.
- To explore the financial aspects of fantasy sports gaming, including the amount of capital set aside for gaming.
- To understand the perception of participants regarding fantasy gaming as a form of gambling or a skill-based competition.



### **Statistical Analysis:**

## 1. Sports Engagement:

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** Participation in fantasy gaming platforms has no significant impact on sports engagement.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Participation in fantasy gaming platforms has significant impact on sports engagement.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2 Sided)
Pearson chi Square	<b>2.806</b> <sup>a</sup>	3	0.422
Likelihood Ratio	2.677	3	0.444
linear-by-Linear association	0.877	1	0.349
N of Valid class	400		
a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5 the minimum expected count is 1.94			

#### Chi - Square Test

# **Chi-Square Test Results Analysis:**

- **Pearson chi-Square:** The calculated chi-square value (2.806) is compared with the critical chi-square value to determine statistical significance. If the calculated value exceeds the critical value, the null hypothesis is rejected. In this case, the p-value associated with Pearson chi-Square is 0.422, indicating that there is no significant relationship.
- Likelihood Ratio: Similar to Pearson chi-Square, the Likelihood Ratio test yields a p-value of 0.444, suggesting no significant relationship.
- Linear-by-Linear Association: With a p-value of 0.349, the linear-by-linear association test also fails to show a significant association.

Based on the chi-square test results, we do not have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The p-values are higher than the conventional significance level of 0.05, indicating that participation in fantasy gaming platforms does not have a statistically significant impact on sports engagement among the surveyed participants. However, it's crucial to note that some cells have expected counts less than 5, which might affect the reliability of the results.



# 2. <u>Skill Development:</u>

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** Participation in fantasy gaming platforms does not significantly enhance users' skills.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Participation in fantasy gaming platforms significantly enhances users' skills.

Chi - Square Test							
	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significanc e (2 Sided)	Exact Significance (2 Sided)	Exact Significance (1 Sided)		
Pearson chi Square	2.335 <sup>a</sup>	1	0.125				
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	1.548	1	0.213				
Likelihood Ratio	3.126	1	0.077				
Fishers Exact Test				0.154	0.097		
linear-by-Linear association	2.349	1	0.125				
N of Valid class	400						
a. 1 cells (25.0%) have count less than 5 the r expected count is 3.64							
b. Computed Only for a 2*2 table							

#### **Chi-Square Test Results Analysis:**

- **Pearson chi-Square:** The calculated chi-square value (2.335) is compared with the critical chi-square value to determine statistical significance. The associated p-value is 0.125, suggesting no significant relationship.
- **Continuity Correction:** The continuity correction value (1.548) is another measure, and its p-value is 0.213, indicating no significant relationship.
- Likelihood Ratio: The Likelihood Ratio test yields a p-value of 0.077, suggesting no



significant relationship.

- **Fishers Exact Test:** This test provides an alternative approach. The two-sided p-value is 0.097, and the one-sided p-value is 0.048. Both values suggest no significant relationship.
- Linear-by-Linear Association: The p-value for this association is 0.125, indicating no significant linear relationship.

Consistent with the Pearson chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests, the additional tests (Continuity Correction, Fishers Exact Test, and Linear-by-Linear Association) reinforce the finding that there is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. All p-values are higher than the conventional significance level of 0.05. The results suggest that participation in fantasy gaming platforms does not significantly enhance users' skills.

## 3. Gambling Behavior:

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** Participation in fantasy gaming platforms has no significant influence on users' gambling behavior.

Chi - Square Test					
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2 Sided)	Exact Significan ce (2 Sided)	Exact Significan ce (1 Sided)
Pearson chi Square	<b>0.000</b> a	1	0.991		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	0.000	1	1		
Likelihood Ratio	0.000	1	0.991		
Fishers Exact Test				1	0.571
linear-by-Linear assosiation	0.000	1	0.991		
N of Valid class	400				
a. 0 cells (0.0%) hava expected count less than 5 the minimum expected count is 6.98					

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Participation in fantasy gaming platforms significantly influences users' gambling behavior.



b. Computed Only for a 2*2 table			

#### Chi-Square Test Results Analysis:

**Pearson chi-Square:** The calculated chi-square value (0.000) is extremely low, and the associated p-value is 0.991, indicating no significant relationship.

Continuity Correction: Similar to the Pearson Chi-Square, the continuity correction value is 0.000 with a p-value of 1.000, suggesting no significant relationship.

Likelihood Ratio: The Likelihood Ratio test also yields a p-value of 0.991, suggesting no significant influence.

**Fishers Exact Test:** The two-sided p-value is 1.000, and the one-sided p-value is 0.571, both indicating no significant relationship.

**Linear-by-Linear Association:** The p-value for this association is 0.000, further supporting the conclusion of no significant linear relationship.

All statistical tests consistently suggest that there is no significant influence of participation in fantasy gaming platforms on users' gambling behaviour. The p-values are substantially higher than the conventional significance level of 0.05, providing robust evidence to retain the null hypothesis. This implies that fantasy gaming participation does not have a substantial impact on users' gambling behaviour among the surveyed participants.

#### **Results and Findings**

The findings of the chi-square test for sports involvement show that there is no substantial impact from using fantasy gaming platforms. It was evaluated to yield likelihood ratio and Pearson's Chisquare p-values larger than 0.05. Therefore, it is not possible to reject the null hypothesis, which implies that research participants' participation in sports is not significantly impacted by fantasy games. In a similar vein, there is no conclusive proof that fantasy games enhance users according to the results of the chi-square test for skill growth. While other test findings do not approach statistical significance, the likelihood ratio test yields a p-value that is marginally below 0.05, indicating that there is no overall impact on sports engagement. Furthermore, as all statistical tests produce high p-values, suggesting that fantasy gaming has no discernible impact on user game behavior, our test of gaming behavior offers strong support for the null hypothesis.

The study's additional knowledge enlightens the participants. Particularly when it comes to the fantasy gaming experience, a significant number of participants showed strategic thinking, and most of them reported getting better at it. The majority of participants reported that having good financial management skills had an impact, indicating potential benefits beyond the exam. There is a lot of official gambling, and much of it has time and money restrictions. Furthermore, a sizable



majority of people view fantasy games as skill-based competition, while a minority sees them as gambling.

This study shows that exposure to media about fantasy games has no discernible effect on research participants' engagement in sports, growth of their skills, or gaming behavior. The favorable impacts on financial management and strategic thinking that have been seen point to potential advantages of fantasy sports that go beyond the particular theories that have been investigated. The aforementioned results enhance comprehension of the correlation between fantasy games and personal conduct, accentuating dynamic play and proficient skill acquisition as noteworthy attributes of the subjects. Additionally, the study looks at the demographics and behavior of those that play fantasy games. It finds that there is a high level of engagement in fantasy sports, a diversity of backgrounds, and a high concentration of people in the 18–24 age bracket.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, a comprehensive study conducted to assess the impact of fantasy games on sports participation, skill development, and gaming behavior yielded some insightful findings. Statistical analysis, including chi-square tests for each hypothesis, still failed to provide significant evidence to support alternative hypotheses. Therefore, access to fantasy gaming platforms Does not have a great impact on sports opportunities and does not improves user base, technology or influence the gaming behavior of research participants. However, this study found an additional dimension to the fantasy gaming experience. Specifically, participants demonstrated strategic thinking in their approach, demonstrated improved financial management skills, and demonstrated responsible gambling practices. Most people think of fantasy games as a skill-based competition rather than a gamble, and our understanding of these pastimes is growing. The survey also shows that 18-24-year-olds, mostly men, play many fantasy games and participate in popular sports such as cricket. These insights contribute to a broader understanding of the multifaceted relationship between fantasy games and individual behavior, enriching the literature on this burgeoning form of entertainment.

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