

Chapter 5

A View on the Impact of Gamified Services in the Wake of the COVID–19 Pandemic: An Interdisciplinary Approach

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ABSTRACT

The chapter examines the researchers' objective to see how gamification has been investigated in various science disciplines during the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact by grouping the findings into central concerns and core issues. The PRISMA approach is used to narrow down the list of relevant articles. The necessity for gamified interventions in the retail, education, and health domains is deliberated in this chapter. The findings suggest that academicians take the chance to collect empirical data and evaluate it in real-time to better understand the impact of gamification in a variety of professions.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has swept the globe, infecting every region. As policymakers struggle with revised lockdown policies to combat the virus's spread, national economies and companies are experiencing adverse consequences. According to the International Monetary Fund, the global economy will contract to 4.9% in 2022. This will mark the fault lines which were initially papered over by 2021's

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projected growth rate of 6%. The downturn faced immediately in the aftermath of the pandemic in 2020 where the IMF predicted a negative growth of -3.2%, according to the officialdoms, is the worst since the Great Depression of the 1930s (*World Economic Outlook Update, July 2021*, 2021). Shoppers remained at home, causing retail footfall to plummet to new lows. Since the first lockdown, the number of pedestrians has decreased even further. The hospitality industry has closed its doors all over the world. The experts say that international travel and tourism will not recover to pre-pandemic heights up until 2025. Because of all these, most of the governments have recently begun to offer a substantial economic assistance program to their residents and enterprises, primarily in the form of wage grants, money allotments to lesser income families, and reductions in taxes and rent drops for businesses (Açıkgöz & Günay, 2020). No doubt that these actions have helped all sectors and people for their existence. Even if we can't stop harmful viruses from advancing, we can plan to mitigate their effect on various economic sectors. The COVID-19 has pushed the idea of working from home into the mainstream, and social isolation has converted the new normal. Consumers' instinct buying habits have been influenced by their ability to do something at home. All these also led to changes in consumer behavior. Understanding more about how we can adapt to these changes to survive or develop the business is a need and a concern.

One of the behavioral effects of the lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic is a massive rise in Internet and social media use (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020). There is also a dramatically altered fulfillment of needs and aspirations such as greater happiness, higher participation, and general well-being, resulting in a higher probability of misfits employed in organizations. People are becoming more linked across the world as a result of digital technologies. In most countries, online shopping has become more popular. The truth is that innovative digital technology has become a requirement rather than an option. The adoption of innovative technologies by various sectors helped them to survive during the pandemic to a greater extent. Gamification has been one of the most critical and innovative technological developments. Gamification is the method of adding game-like features to a service in order to support users' overall value development (Huotari & Hamari, 2012). Gamification's main goal is to encourage desired user activity. Understanding psychology theories is a necessary and unavoidable building block in the development of good gamification since motivation and behavior are explored in psychology. Gamification may be encompassed in a variety of situations from the past years. They include topics such as business, fitness, well-being, productivity, learning, and development, sports, finances, entertainment, crowdsourcing, etc., to name a few. We also see gamification strategies that are more organized around concepts of intrinsic motivation instead of just driven by external influences in early 2019.

Gamification is gaining importance across various sectors and also being in the interest of both industrialists and academicians. We can also find research papers which are empirically proved that gamification has positive significance in multiple areas (Majuri et al., 2018a) and has been published globally by IGI Global, Sage Publications, and Springer, etc. However the research that focuses on the influence of gamification on different verticals during the COVID-19 pandemic has been overlooked. This is an area that needs to be addressed as it could provide both academicians and managers with many inferences and possible coping mechanisms for such situations in the future. Therefore, the mission is to check how gamification has been studied during the COVID-19 pandemic in interdisciplinary branches of science and the effect it now has by highlighting the results into central topics and core issues. For this, the relevant empirical papers that match with the context are being identified by looking at various journals. The PRISMA methodology is expanded to identify the relevant works of literature, which is detailed in the methodology part. The working principles and theories were explained, which back up the relevance of the literature. Basically, the chapter will cover three areas like retail, education, and health,

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