

The Motivation for Spending on '*GACHA*' Content of the Mobile Social Game

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ABSTRACT

Of late, the mobile social game industry is growing very fast with super-profits as compared to other social game platforms. The phenomenal growth of the game industry has drawn researchers' attention and interest in examining the motivation for spending money in this industry. There is a lot of research on different dimensions of the game industry. However, little has been known so far about the motivation for spending money on a top money-making mobile game such as *GACHA* social game. The *GACHA* function works in a similar way as the lottery does to randomize something for the virtual payoffs such as rarity, sprites, characters items, and so on. Although this *GACHA* function involves enormous risks for the players, it has become the top-money-making tool in terms of profits for the mobile social game company. Thus, many game making companies adopted this model and embedded *GACHA* function into their mobile social games to increase profit.

Given the above, this thesis aims to study the motivation for players to spend money in *GACHA* function of the mobile social game. In doing so, the study used an online survey of 598 social mobile game players via the game community platform. The research invokes the structural equation model (SEM) to analyze the collected responses and to examine the relationship between factors. Besides, the study has separated players into two groups: Paying Player Group, and Potential Paying Player Group. The results of the study show that these two-player groups have different virtual value perceptions that lead them to pay money for the mobile game. The Paying

Player Group focuses on the value of contents in *GACHA* instead of monetary value. Besides, factors such as time limitation, quantity limitation, player's characteristics, and exclusive results from *GACHA* positively motivate the Paying Players to pay for *GACHA* social game. It is also found that social stimulus is positively associated with the Paying Player Group to spend money on the mobile social game.

On the other hand, the Potential Paying Player Group focuses on factors such as improvement of their in-game status and increase in competitive position among the game players. However, the empirical results confirm that none of the groups (paid and not paid players) prefer risk while playing *GACHA*. Even though the function of *GACHA* is to randomize the expected results and risk creation is involved in the gaming process, the players want the certainty of the results in *GACHA* function.

Keywords: Smartphones, mobile devices, mobile social game, motivation to pay for mobile social games, in-game purchases, free-to-play, freemium, virtual goods