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ESPORTS: OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE AMONG YOUTH IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

The rising global popularity of mobile esports has significantly influenced youth participation in Malaysia. However, concerns regarding excessive gaming, aggression, and addiction necessitate further investigation. Thus, this study adapted the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) to analyse the intention of youth esports players using the construct factors (i.e., social interaction, hedonic value, awareness, game addiction, gender discrimination, and negative stigma). This study examines the factors influencing Malaysian youth participation in esports using a structured questionnaire (n = 215), analysed through standardised multiple regression using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Overall, results indicate that hedonic value and awareness strongly influence esports participation. Furthermore, the findings provide insights for policymakers, educators, and industry stakeholders to develop strategies that promote responsible esports engagement while mitigating potential risks.

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Introduction

Esports, which are structured and competitive video games, have become a global trend, especially among young people. Their acceptance has grown from just a fun activity to a recognised professional sport and a viable career option (Yin *et al*., 2023). Esports include various multiplayer video games played competitively online such as Counter-Strike, FIFA, DOTA, and Mobile Legends. Notably, these games are relatively different from traditional sports such as football or badminton (Yusoff & Basri, 2021). In Malaysia, esports have experienced significant growth. The Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) has been a key player in developing local talent by hosting competitions and training programmes. Consequently, this has led to an increase in gamers, now estimated at approximately 14 million (The New Straits Times, 2023), while also implying how youth interests and career goals are changing.

The term "youth" in Malaysia has a broad definition. The National Youth Development Policy (NYDP) includes people aged 15 to 40 years. In contrast, the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM) defines youth as those aged 15 to 24 years. In the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the definition ranges from 15 to 35 years (Islamic Development Bank, 2019). Even with these differences, most youth development programmes in Malaysia focus on individuals aged 18 to 25 years.

Previous research has identified several factors that lead to youth involvement in

esports. Gamers often connect with others who share similar interests, experiences, and values. Concurrently, this common engagement creates a sense of community and improves social bonding (Yunus *et al.*, 2021). Through gaming, individuals often develop friendships and networks that might not form in offline settings.

Another important motivator is hedonic value, which relates to the pleasure, excitement, and entertainment that come from gaming. Watching esports live-streams, joining tournaments, or just playing games brings feelings of joy, satisfaction, and a break from daily stress (Yin *et al.*, 2023). For example, Jo and Shin (2024) noted that Generation Z players' involvement in esports is strongly influenced by the enjoyment and thrill they find in immersive gaming environments. This is also supported by their perceived ability to access and navigate these platforms (George, 2024).

Awareness is important for increasing esports participation. The Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS) created the Strategic Plan for Esports Development 2020-2025. This plan aims to support organised growth and provide opportunities for youth to succeed in esports at school, university, and community levels.

Nevertheless, gaming addiction is still a serious problem. Esports frequently entail a lot of practice and play, particularly in games such as Multiplayer Online Battle Arenas (MOBA), First-Person Shooters (FPS), and Real-Time Strategy (RTS) games (Chiu *et al*., 2021). In addition, extended gaming can have a negative effect on general well-being by causing lifestyle problems like sleep deprivation and physical health neglect.

Another issue affecting the inclusivity of esports is gender discrimination. Male players typically control competitive scenes, while female players frequently experience prejudice and underestimation of their skills (Yan, 2024). At the same time, female participation and advancement are hindered by instances of sexual harassment and unequal recognition (Yusoff & Mohd Yunus, 2021).

Furthermore, the negative stigma associated with esports continues to influence how the public perceives it. According to the KBS (2019), many individuals associate gaming with poor productivity, behavioural issues, or a lack of job opportunities. While esports continue to be relatively inclusive, fostering distinct identity and social integration dynamics, traditional sports exhibit distinct gender, age, and ability distinctions (Summerly, 2020). Thus, to establish esports as a legitimate professional industry, this negative stigma must be removed.

Although esports is gaining popularity in Malaysia, there remains a lack of research on the psychological and motivational factors that influence young people's involvement. To bridge these gaps, the following research questions will be examined in this study:

- RQ1: What are the factors that influence youth to participate in esports?
- RQ2: What is the relationship between social interaction, hedonic value, awareness, game addiction, discrimination of gender, negative stigma, and influencing Malaysia's youth to participate in esports?

Research Framework

This study is built on a framework that examines the factors influencing people to get involved in esports, which includes Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). In particular, it focuses on four key factors: Social interaction, enjoyment (or hedonic value), awareness, and negative perceptions. Each of these elements plays a role for an individual to participate in esports. Correspondingly, this study integrates the relationship between hedonic value, awareness, and esports participation. The current study's research framework is depicted in Figure 1.

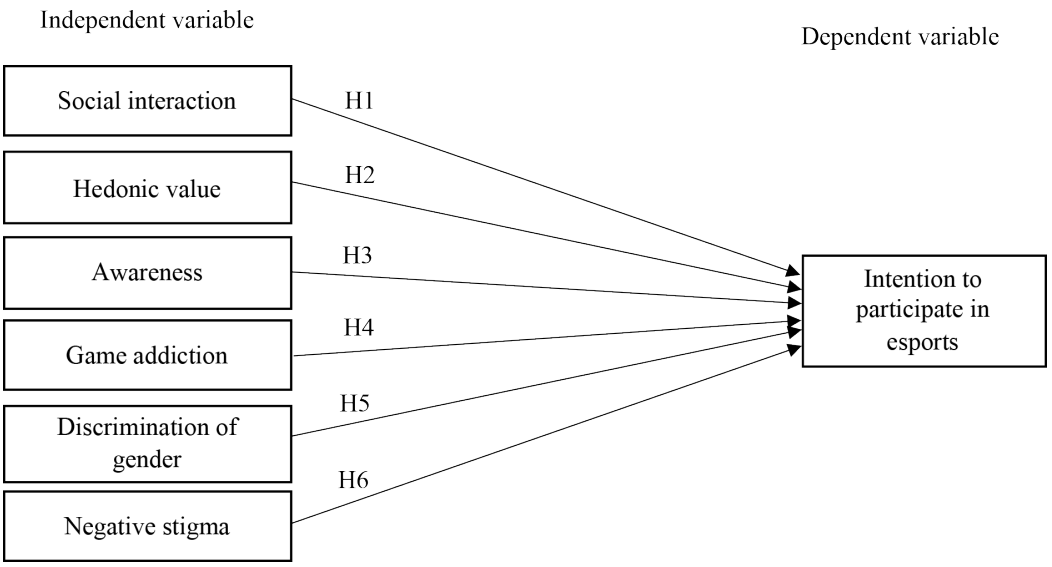

Figure 1: Research framework

Social Interaction

Trail and James (2001) created the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC), which provides guidance for measuring the social interaction component. It was reported to be significantly associated with increased purchases of sports products and sports media, fandom for esports teams, and loyalty to a sports team. Building on this, many players are drawn in since they can connect with friends, form teams, and be part of a gaming community. Generally, these social experiences make the game more fun and can even lead to long-term friendships that keep people coming back.

In order to interact with other players, one needed a media channel such as Twitch, for broadcasting. Since it has a direct connection to the fulfilment that comes from networking via social media interaction, this is in line with UGT. In addition, a vast array of gaming content such as DOTA 2, League of Legends, and Counter Strike can be observed on Twitch. In short, nearly every major game played, watched, and appreciated globally is broadcast on Twitch, as are the most significant events related to them.

Consistent with this, intention to play video games is strongly positively correlated with single-player mode, watching gaming streams, playing with friends either locally or online, purchasing products or services they first saw in a gaming stream, and live-streaming their gameplay (Ludwig *et al.*, 2023). Accordingly, 75% of Malaysian video gamers played as single players, while 39% played locally with friends.

H1: There is a significant relationship between social interaction and the intention to participate in esports.

Hedonic Value

The TPB in the current study can be expanded by suggesting that hedonic value affects esports participation intention. The other theory is the UGT, which emphasises people's needs, motivations, and satisfactions (Katz *et al.*, 1973). Whether it is the thrill of competition, the amazing graphics, or the immersive storylines, people play games because they enjoy them. In other words, this sense of pleasure and excitement is a major reason why players stay engaged.

Xiao (2019) asserted that escapism is the act of escaping stress and other problems that arise in daily life. When players were exhausted from their daily tasks, escapism provided them with strong motivation. The hedonic determinant of esports consumption was noted to serve as a form of escapism. According to other studies, hedonic value can be summed up as simply enjoying a game or watching one and killing time by immersing oneself in something one might not otherwise do (Syafita, 2018).

According to a study by Qian *et al.* (2019), esports consumers may be encouraged to participate in esports by taking pleasure in the competitive thrill and entertaining elements of esports. Due to the inherent advantages of playing a sport to improve one's quality of life, as well as the unique features of the technology, flow experience, and subjective well-being should be taken into account when watching esports on streaming services (Kim & Kim, 2020). Notably, participating in immersive experiences and narratives can improve life satisfaction as a result. Accordingly, escapism, enjoyment, and involvement will be used as the psychological factors in the current study, and it is anticipated that these two factors will have a significant impact on the intention to engage in esports.

H2: There is a significant relationship between hedonic value and the intention to participate in esports.

Awareness

In TPB, awareness may affect subjective norms (what important people think and do), attitudes (beliefs about the outcomes of actions), and perceived behavioural control (beliefs about how easy or difficult it is to act). This awareness (how it works, what games are popular, and where events happen) is more likely to take part in what often comes from friends, social media, or influencers, and can spark curiosity or even commitment. As such, esports can be promoted as a sustainable industry, and attitudes can be changed with the aid of media coverage and educational initiatives.

According to a study by Ludwig *et al.* (2023), 93% of Malaysians are aware of the video gaming industry, and the results for the other video engagement maturity in 2022 are presented in three categories: Meaningful reach (71%), regular reach (58%), and total reach (79%). MDEC hosts boot camps and esports competitions to raise awareness of esports as a legitimate sport with potential career opportunities. In the modern esports industry, FPS, MOBA, RTS, sports simulation, card games, and fighting games are generally the most well-known and popular game genres (Tang *et al.*, 2023).

H3: There is a significant relationship between awareness and the intention to participate in esports.

Game Addiction

A lack of perceived behavioural control may be the cause of people feeling under pressure to play video games. Since it offers an escape from reality and meets entertainment needs, it also aligns with UGT. Addiction to excessive gaming has been connected to detrimental impacts on mental health and general well-being. Similarly, this addiction may affect a person's capacity to perform everyday tasks and engage in social interactions.

Kim (2019) established that three children in Semarang, Indonesia, suffered from mental health problems due to online gaming, and South Korean players died after days of playing without eating or sleeping (Farasonalia & Assifa, 2019). Based on the 2021 Mobile Gaming Addiction survey among 80 gamers aged between 18 and 28 in Selangor by Universiti Teknologi MARA, the findings revealed that 45% of respondents played video games more than six hours per day.

However, although it is highly challenging to survive in a highly competitive market, some people still believe that this is a very risky investment, according to Afonina (2024). They can begin their new career in several ways such as live-streaming, marketing service, YouTube, joining or starting an esports team or club, or even selling goods. This could help esports players, particularly young ones, launch their careers and earn more money from gaming for a longer period.

H4: There is a significant relationship between game addiction and the intention to participate in esports.

Discrimination of Gender

These are social and normative factors that impact the social pressure component of TPB. They encompass how people's intentions and views of their capacity to control their behaviour are influenced by the norms and expectations of society. Despite the rise in inclusivity, gender stereotypes persist since men continue to believe that women are inadequate esports players, and since the media continues to hold negative views about women's skills. As in Mobile Legends, where players must form teams to battle against other teams according to their designated roles, each player in the group must perform a specific task in Player Unknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG). Notably, it is common for men and women to play different roles in the arena mode. Women are usually given only supportive roles, whereas men are usually given important positions (Yusoff & Basri, 2021).

Since the start of the esports revolution, male players have remained in control of esports competitions. Violent themes such as war, shooting, and fighting mostly attract male players. Thus, the nature of esports is preferable for male players than female players. Therefore, the current research will focus on the psychological factors in terms of gender discrimination that are anticipated to influence the intention to engage in esports.

H5: There is a significant relationship between discrimination of gender and the intention to participate in esports.

Negative Stigma

To investigate negative stigma among Malaysian youth regarding their intention to participate in esports, the current study used the TPB. For example, Lee *et al.* (2023) observed that attitudes toward esports and perceived behavioural control to participate in esports were positively connected with intentions to do so. Some people view gaming as a waste of time or express concerns that it leads to bad habits. These negative views, especially from older generations or non-gamers can discourage new players.

According to the KBS (2019), esports athletes work just as hard and foster a sense of patriotism as traditional athletes. On the other hand, false beliefs about gaming culture could lead to a lack of parental and educational support. To dispel misunderstandings, we should begin at the bottom and work our way up to inform the community, educators, and parents about the benefits and possibilities of esports. Hence, addressing public apprehension and clearing up common concerns and misconceptions will result in a more positive public perception of esports.

H6: There is a significant relationship between negative stigma and the intention to participate in esports.

Materials and Methods

Sample Design and Data Collection

Data was collected via online surveys through Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) email, Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, X, Instagram,

and TikTok. Following this, respondents were recruited using the snowball sampling method, which performed well for reaching Malaysian youth involved in esports. In total, 215 respondents participated, with most being students (65.1%).

A pre-test was also conducted to determine respondents' thoughts on the questions, completion time, measurement scales, wording, instructions, and any confusion regarding the questions. Essentially, the findings indicate that most respondents did not have any issues with the concerns mentioned above. On average, it took them about five minutes to complete the survey.

The Instrument

This section focuses on the measurement scale and questionnaire development. This study employed multiple regression analysis to evaluate how social interaction, hedonic value, awareness, game addiction, gender discrimination, and negative stigma affect esports participation.

Each item in the questionnaire was rated using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree (Zhang & Savalei, 2016). The details of the questionnaires can be observed in Appendix A. Furthermore, to ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by three subject-matter experts in esports and psychology, who assessed the clarity, cultural relevance, and appropriateness of the items. Ultimately, 10 respondents participated in a pre-test to make minor adjustments for improved readability and contextual adaptation to Malaysian youth.

Higher scores reflected stronger agreement with the construct being measured. According to Trail and James (2001), esports participation is motivated by the need for social connection, friendship, and a sense of belonging. Total scores range from 6 to 30, with higher scores reflecting stronger social interaction motives. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha values of 0.92 in this study indicate excellent reliability. Xiao (2019) and Qian *et al.* (2019) stated that hedonic value focused on enjoyment, escapism, and thrill of esports, with a total range from 6 to 30, reflects stronger hedonic value motivations. Additionally, constructs such as escapism and enjoyment are well-established with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.91. Furthermore, Ludwig *et al.* (2014) and Tanta *et al.* (2014) mentioned that esports player has awareness as a career and recreational field where the Cronbach's alpha is 0.92.

Kim (2019) discovered that excessive gaming behaviours interfere with daily life when the two items were reverse-coded (e.g., "I can easily stop playing when I want to") to reduce acquiescence bias. The Cronbach's alpha for game addiction is 0.88 in this study. Meanwhile, Yusoff and Basri (2021) and Yan (2024) demonstrated that stereotypes and barriers for female gamers, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85, indicating good reliability. This is adapted from Lee *et al.* (2023) and Zhao and Zhu (2021), focusing on public perceptions and stereotypes about gaming. Specifically, the Cronbach's alpha yields a score of 0.87 and has one item that was reverse-coded (e.g., "Most people around me consider esports a valuable activity"). For the intention item, the Cronbach's alpha value of 0.92 indicates excellent reliability.

Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.85, which indicates strong internal consistency, and composite reliability was also examined to support alpha findings in order to establish reliability. Together, these steps ensure that the instrument is guaranteed to accurately capture the intended constructs and represent a humanised understanding of young people's involvement in esports.

Questionnaire Development

Details of the questionnaire for this study are based on previous research. The complete questionnaire is provided in Appendix B. The questionnaire was made to be clear, objective, and relevant. Simultaneously, the Likert scale is used to gather different types of data and establish specific goals that match the main purpose of this study.

Results and Discussions

Characteristics of the Sample

Descriptive analysis was utilised to review the respondents' demographic characteristics. Main findings are summarised in Table 1. The profile reveals that 62% of the respondents were male, while 38% were female. The average age of the respondents was between 18 and 22 years old, and they were studying for a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, most respondents were of Malay ethnicity, and the majority were students (65%) who tend to play esports games. This includes a professional player under the Malaysian esports committee, known as Homebois. While 10 players also consider themselves professionals, these players are unregistered with the Malaysian esports committee.

Table 1: Summary of demographic characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (Mean = 18–22)		
18–22	100	46.5
23–26	61	28.4
27–30	54	25.1
Gender		
Male	133	61.9
Female	82	38.1
Ethnic		
Malay	190	88.4
Chinese	16	7.4
Indian	4	1.9
Others	5	2.3
Current highest level of education		
SPM/STPM	26	12.1
Matriculation	3	1.4
Foundation	2	0.9
Vocational/Polytechnic	4	1.9
College (Certificate/Diploma)	33	15.3
Degree	114	53.0
Master	26	12.1
PhD	7	3.3

Current residence		
Wilayah Persekutuan	10	4.7
Selangor	21	9.8
Perlis	1	0.5
Kedah	14	6.5
Pulau Pinang	5	2.3
Perak	10	4.7
Negeri Sembilan	9	4.2
Melaka	2	0.9
Johor	14	6.5
Kelantan	17	7.9
Terengganu	97	45.1
Pahang	9	4.2
Sabah	6	2.8
Sarawak	0	0.0
Yearly income (include students' loans, paid employment, etc.)		
Below RM1,000.00	108	50.2
RM1,001.00–RM3,000.00	59	27.4
RM3,001.00–RM5,000.00	12	5.6
Above RM5,001.00	36	16.7
Place to play esports		
Home	188	87.4
Café cyber	3	1.4
Restaurant	3	1.4
Mamak	3	1.4
School	2	0.9
Work place	2	0.9
University	3	1.4
All above	2	0.9
Not applicable	9	4.2
Player category		
Professional	10	4.7
Non-professional	205	95.3
Member of esports Malaysia		
Yes	1	0.5
No	214	99.5
Frequency of playing esports per day		
Less than 1 hour	108	50.2
2–3 hours	79	36.7
4–5 hours	21	9.8
More than 6 hours	7	3.3

Types of esports played		
DOTA 2	8	3.7
Player Unknown's Battleground (PUBG)	38	17.7
Mobile Legend: Bang	86	40.0
Free Fire	15	7.0
Counter-Strike	8	3.7
League of Legends (LOL)	8	3.7
Others	52	24.2
Current status		
Student	140	65.1
Working	58	27.0
Not working	17	7.9
Esports can give benefits to the youth		
Yes	181	84.2
No	34	15.8

Reliability of the Scales

Table 2 presents the results of the reliability analysis for the scales. Overall, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for this study range from 0.8 to 0.9, indicating strong internal consistency for all the variables.

Table 2: Reliability analysis of scales

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Social interaction	6	0.92
Hedonic value	6	0.91
Awareness	6	0.92
Game addiction	6	0.88
Discrimination of gender	6	0.85
Negative stigma	6	0.87
Intention	6	0.92

Hypotheses Testing

This section presents the results of hypothesis testing. Table 3 outlines the six complete research hypotheses, which are based on the research framework illustrated in Figure 1. Consistent with this, correlation analysis and standard multiple regression analysis were employed to investigate hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6.

Results of Hypothesis 1, which examines the relationship between social interaction and intention are not supported. Meanwhile, the result of Hypothesis 2, which investigates the relationship between hedonic value and intention, validated the hypothesis. It could be that the respondents believed esports may help youth players obtain better hedonic value, such as fame and popularity. Therefore, youth participation in esports is influenced by a stronger motivation. According to the result of Hypothesis 3, the hypothesis was supported by the relationship between awareness and intention. Youth players are primarily influenced to compete in esports by their peers and social media. In essence, both players' abilities and knowledge of esports games are enhanced by these two interactions.

Furthermore, the non-significant relationship between game addiction and esports participation (Hypothesis 4) may be attributed to the underrepresentation of highly addicted

individuals in the sample. Additionally, self-reported survey data may not accurately capture addiction severity. On a similar note, the finding of Hypothesis 5 on gender discrimination is also not supported. Hypothesis 6 indicated that the absence of a strong link between negative stigma and esports participation may imply that society's views on gaming are changing. Nevertheless, further qualitative research is necessary to explore whether stigma impacts long-term career prospects in esports.

Table 3: Research hypotheses

H1	There is a significant relationship between social interaction and intention to participate in esports among youth in Malaysia.	Hypothesis not supported
H2	There is a significant relationship between hedonic value and intention to participate in esports among youth in Malaysia.	Hypothesis supported
H3	There is a significant relationship between awareness and intention to participate in esports among youth in Malaysia.	Hypothesis supported
H4	There is a significant relationship between game addiction and intention to participate in esports among youth in Malaysia.	Hypothesis not supported
H5	There is a significant relationship between discrimination based on gender and intention to participate in esports among youth in Malaysia.	Hypothesis not supported
H6	There is a significant relationship between negative stigma and intention to participate in esports among youth in Malaysia.	Hypothesis not supported

Relationship between Variables

The Pearson product-moment correlation (r) assesses the relationship between variables, which includes six hypotheses: H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6. Subsequently, two-tailed tests of significance were used. Table 4 presents the result of Pearson's Correlation Matrix analysis.

The relationship between social interaction, hedonic value, awareness, game addiction, discrimination of gender, and intention is mostly significant ($p < 0.001$, two-tailed). Notably, there is a negative correlation (r = -0.103) between negative stigma and intention. By contrast, the correlation of negative stigma is not significant ($p > 0.001$, two-tailed). Therefore, the analysis of the relationship among variables supports H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5.

Table 4: Pearson's correlation matrix (in n = 215, two-tailed in all cases)

		Social Interaction	Hedonic Value	Awareness	Game Addiction	Discrimination of Gender	Negative Stigma	Intention
Social interaction	r	–	.659**	.649**	.602**	.218**	-.038	.422**
	Sig.		< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	> 0.001	< 0.001
Hedonic value	r		–	.735**	.721**	.273**	-.126	.626**
	Sig.			< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	> 0.001	< 0.001
Awareness	r			–	.709**	.256**	-.117	.626**
	Sig.				< 0.001	< 0.001	> 0.001	< 0.001
Game addiction	r				–	.402**	.000	.456**
	Sig.					< 0.001	> 0.001	< 0.001
Discrimination of gender	r					–	.302**	.180**
	Sig.						< 0.001	< 0.001
Negative stigma	r						–	-.103
	Sig.							> 0.001
Intention	r							–
	Sig.							

Note: **Correlation is significant at $p < 0.001$.

Degree of Relationship between Variables

In this study, standard multiple regression helped explore the relationship between social interaction, hedonic value, awareness, game addiction, and discrimination of gender. Together, these factors explained 40% of the variance in intention. Table 5 indicates that no tolerance value is below 0.1, and no Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) exceeds 10. The results of the standard multiple regression analyses are presented in Table 5.

Generally, hedonic value and awareness significantly contribute to explaining the dependent variables. Despite this, social interaction, game addiction, and discrimination of gender do not significantly predict the dependent variable ($p > 0.05$). In conclusion, the standard multiple regression analysis supports H2 and H3 from the earlier analysis.

Table 5: Standard multiple regression analysis

Model	$F_{4,244}$	Sig.	Adjusted R^2	ß	Sig.	T	VIF
Intention	28.34	< 0.001	.40				
Social interaction				-.02	.753	.50	2.0
Hedonic value				.54	.000	.35	2.8
Awareness				.18	.041	.37	2.7
Game addiction				-.06	.515	.37	2.7
Discrimination of gender				.02	.833	.84	1.2

Conclusions

The current study discovered that the findings were able to explain factors influencing the youth's intention to participate in esports. The correlation analysis reveals that social interaction, hedonic value, awareness, game addiction, and discrimination of gender have a strongly positive relationship with this intention. Nonetheless, laws might limit violent or addictive game mechanisms, require age ratings, and prohibit in-game transactions. This might assist in safeguarding vulnerable groups.

Moreover, clearly defined laws might prohibit gender-based discrimination in esports during competitions. Overall, the findings of this study suggest that hedonic value significantly influences youth's intention to participate in esports. Meanwhile, previous research indicates that youngsters engage in esports due to hedonic value, which is linked to real-world experiences and consumption related to esports (Herng & Singh, 2023). Hence, it appears that youth find hedonic value in the excitement they experience from participating in esports games.

The findings may provide opportunities for youth to face any challenges in the esports world. This study establishes that hedonic value and awareness are important factors influencing esports participation among youth in Malaysia. However, the fact that the present study had a positive outcome in those two variables indicates that the snowball sampling method should be seen as a limitation. While practical, it may not provide a representative sample of the youth population, which could limit the generalisability of the findings. In response, stratified sampling could be used in future research based on amateur and professional esports players.

Another limitation of the study was that reliance on self-reported data through Google Forms could introduce biases such as self-selection and social desirability biases, which might affect the reliability of the data. Following this, future studies can consider utilising the Qualtrics platform to create a complex survey to track changes in youth gaming behaviours over time.

Essentially, these findings highlight the need for policymakers to promote structured esports programs that balance engagement with mental well-being. In addition, educational institutions and the KBS can integrate esports into extracurricular activities to provide a regulated environment for gaming. Thus, by developing a platform for esports players to connect, this could encourage more registered professional players to be involved in esports. It is also crucial to consider the legal aspect as esports regulations are expanding in Malaysia, which include tournament rules, intellectual property, and contract law (Isadora & Associates, 2020). Nevertheless, since esports is still a new and growing industry, more legal improvements are needed to address emerging concerns. Therefore, we can conclude that hedonic value and awareness create more opportunities to explore additional factors that influence the intention to participate in esports.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors agree that this research was conducted in the absence of any self-benefits, commercial, or financial conflicts and declare the absence of conflicting interests with the funders.

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