

Staying ahead of the game: What drives mobile game satisfaction?



With over 410 000 games currently available on the Google Play Store and over 260 000 on the iOS App Store, it's no wonder that the mobile gaming industry is predicted to reach revenues of \$106 billion by 2021. The vast amount of competition in the industry poses a challenge for game developers and marketing managers – how do you get your game noticed, downloaded and played?

A study was conducted by Lerana van Niekerk, a Master's student in the Department of Marketing Management, to examine whether psychological drivers such as effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, personal gratification and enjoyment, predict need satisfaction within the South African mobile gaming industry. Game satisfaction is extremely important since improved satisfaction positively affects loyalty, repurchase intention, price sensitivity, positive word-of-mouth, shareholder value and ultimately an organisation's bottom line.

An online survey was conducted, and 307 responses were obtained from South African smartphone users with experience in mobile gaming. Findings revealed that four psychological drivers are statistically significant predictors of gaming need satisfaction; enjoyment emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by gaming capability (a new construct that emerged from the analysis), personal gratification and effort expectancy. To ensure mobile gaming satisfaction, mobile game developers should thus ensure their games are enjoyable; this includes considering aspects such as novelty and design

aesthetics. In terms of personal gratification, game features should challenge players and require them to gain mastery for the game to be more satisfying.

Mobile game marketers need to be creative in order to get their game noticed and downloaded. In 2018 alone, more than 50 billion hours' worth of gaming content was streamed on YouTube, it is thus suggested that mobile game marketers create a YouTube channel for their game. This will allow them to post game play tutorials, to release trailers and teasers to spark player interest, to engage with the gaming community, and to receive feedback and suggestions from players. Lastly, mobile game marketers can explore using App Store Optimisation (ASO) to get their games noticed. ASO helps games get higher rankings and increase discoverability when potential players browse app stores.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2019 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Lerana van Niekerk under the supervision of [Dr. Michael Humbani](#).