

Game Marketing Models Affecting Consumer Purchase Decision in Thailand

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Abstract. This study aims to examine: (1) the game marketing models that influence consumers' game purchase decisions in Thailand, (2) the promotional strategies that impact those decisions, and (3) the psychological factors affecting consumers' decisions to purchase games. A quantitative research methodology was applied, collecting data from 400 respondents who had experience purchasing or spending money in games. The data were gathered using an online questionnaire and selected through purposive sampling. The research instrument, a questionnaire, was validated by experts for content validity and tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a high reliability score of 0.852. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means and percentages) and inferential statistics, including t-tests, F-tests, and multiple regression analysis to explore the relationships and influences of independent variables on consumer purchasing decisions. The findings and statistical analysis were used to test the hypotheses and propose suitable game marketing strategies aligned with Thai consumer behavior. The results are expected to benefit game developers, marketers, and stakeholders within the gaming industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

The gaming industry has emerged as one of the most rapidly growing sectors within the digital business landscape over the past two decades. This expansion is continuously driven by advances in technology and clear shifts in consumer behavior. According to Statista (2023), the global gaming industry was valued at approximately USD 197 billion in 2022, with projections indicating growth to USD 268 billion by 2025. This highlights a strong upward trend in global game consumption. A key factor contributing to this growth is the transition from physical game distribution (physical copies) to digital platforms, which enable global consumers to access games more conveniently.

Such transformations have compelled game developers to redesign marketing strategies to ensure sustainable and consistent revenue generation. These include one-time purchase models, subscription-based systems, free-to-play games with microtransactions, and hybrid models. Each of these formats directly affects consumer purchase behavior across multiple dimensions - particularly in terms of willingness to pay, perceived value, and continued engagement with the game.

In the context of Thailand, the gaming industry is also experiencing high growth, especially among newer generations who are well-versed in technology and digital media. However, there remain limitations in the availability of in-depth data regarding the factors influencing Thai consumers' game purchase decisions. Issues such as reluctance to pay for games or in-game content, distrust in game quality, and perceived pressure from aggressive marketing tactics - particularly in microtransaction systems - pose ethical concerns and purchasing hesitation.

The decision to purchase games is not solely determined by the marketing model. It is also influenced by promotional strategies, such as discounts, free trials, and influencer marketing - as well as psychological factors including personal motivation, perceived value, and emotional experience during gameplay. These elements collectively drive or inhibit consumer purchase behavior.

Therefore, this research is significant as it offers a comprehensive examination of key dimensions within game marketing in relation to consumer behavior in Thailand. It focuses on analyzing game marketing models, promotional strategies, and consumer psychological factors that affect game purchase decisions. This study not only fills a gap in the academic literature but also provides actionable insights for designing marketing strategies that align with the behavioral patterns and cultural context of Thai gamers.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the game marketing models that influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand.
- 2) To examine the promotional strategies that affect consumer purchase decisions in Thailand.
- 3) To investigate the psychological factors of consumers that influences their purchase decisions in Thailand.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

This research is grounded in marketing theories, consumer behavior, and psychological decision-making frameworks. It specifically focuses on examining the relationships among game marketing models, promotional strategies, and psychological factors of consumers that influence game purchase decisions in Thailand. The literature review aims to synthesize relevant academic knowledge and empirical findings to support the formulation of hypotheses and the application of statistical analyses in this study.

Firstly, the study investigates game marketing models, which include one-time purchase, subscription-based, free-to-play with microtransactions, and hybrid models. Each model influences consumers' perceived value in different ways and can be

used as independent variables to analyze their impact on purchase decisions.

Secondly, promotion strategies are considered essential tools for stimulating consumer interest and purchase intentions. These strategies include offering discounts, providing free trials, and utilizing social media influencers. Analyzing these approaches helps to understand the mechanisms that effectively drive purchasing behavior.

Lastly, psychological factors of consumers, such as gaming motivation, perceived value, satisfaction, and a sense of ownership, play a significant role in purchase decisions, especially in the context of digital products like video games, where emotional engagement and experiential value are key elements of consumption.

Hypothesis 1: Game marketing models significantly influence game purchase decisions in Thailand.

Hypothesis 1.1: The one-time purchase game marketing model influences game purchase decisions in Thailand.

Chairitchaichai (2017) categorized game marketing models into various types, including one-time purchase, subscription, free-to-play with in-game purchases, and hybrid models. He stated that the one-time purchase model provides a sense of "value" and "completion in a single payment," making it suitable for consumers who value complete ownership of game content and prefer not to incur additional costs during gameplay.

Tangkitkarndee (2021) explained that although the one-time purchase model is a traditional approach to selling games, it faces limitations in generating long-term revenue compared to newer models such as subscriptions or microtransactions. However, he emphasized that some consumer segments still prefer one-time purchases if the game offers high quality and a comprehensive gameplay experience.

Theeraphongpattana-kit et al. (2024) examined the behavior of consumers purchasing gaming consoles and found that their decisions were partly influenced by "brand value" and "user experience." These factors clearly align with the one-time purchase model, as high-priced games are often associated with high quality and long-term value from a single payment.

Khamsat and Farangthong (2023) emphasized that price and promotional activities are critical factors affecting online game purchase decisions. This is especially relevant for the one-time purchase model, where prices are typically higher than other formats. The researchers suggested that targeted discount strategies and promotional campaigns can effectively stimulate interest and reduce hesitation among potential buyers.

Hypothesis 1.2: The subscription-based game marketing model influences game purchase decisions in Thailand.

Lu and LaRiviere (2021) stated that the subscription-based model enables consumers to access games or digital goods at a lower cost compared to the one-time purchase model. This pricing structure significantly impacts both consumer welfare and producer revenue. Consumers gain access to a broader range of digital content with greater flexibility in spending on game experiences. As a result, game developers are able to expand their customer base to include segments with lower willingness to pay.

Svärd (2021) explained that the subscription model has become a popular option among modern gamers, as it provides affordable access to a wide range of games. Players can explore various game types without needing to purchase each title individually. This has shifted purchase behavior toward preferences for variety and value, rather than exclusive ownership of a single game.

Divya (2024) pointed out that the revenue models in the gaming industry have evolved from traditional one-time purchases to subscription-based models, which focus on building long-term player engagement. This model allows companies to maintain a stable user base, generate recurring revenue, and rapidly update game content based on user preferences.

Locke and Uhrinová (2017) emphasized that the growth of subscription services, such as Xbox Game Pass and PlayStation Now, has transformed not only revenue generation mechanisms but also the way value is co-created between companies and consumers. In these systems, players are no longer mere consumers but become participants in value creation through ongoing use and interaction with content. This directly influences players' long-term spending decisions in a fundamentally new way.

Hypothesis 1.3: The free-to-play and microtransaction game marketing model influences game purchase decisions in Thailand.

Tangkitkarndee (2021) stated that the free-to-play and microtransaction model has become a dominant strategy in the digital gaming industry, as it enables continuous revenue generation from players without relying solely on the sale of full-priced games. He emphasized that offering ongoing experiences through content updates, in-game events, and the sale of supplementary items, such as exclusive items or character skins, significantly enhances player retention and encourages repeat purchases.

Divya (2024) explained that in-game purchases, which form the core of the free-to-play model, allow players to access games at no initial cost and later decide whether to buy additional content or features based on their preferences. This aligns with the spending behavior of modern gamers, who seek flexibility and are willing to pay when they perceive value or competitive advantage.

Pashkov (2021) noted that the gaming industry's shift toward free-to-play models is a response to evolving consumer behavior. He highlighted that this model attracts a large player base into the game ecosystem and enables companies to generate revenue from high-spending users (known as "whales") by offering compelling content and in-game items through microtransactions.

Khamsat and Farangthong (2023) argued that game companies must adopt marketing strategies that align with both player behavior and the nature of the game itself. The free-to-play model with microtransactions is particularly suitable for games that emphasize long-term player engagement and aim to expand their user base widely. They proposed that balancing fairness in gameplay with monetization opportunities through optional items is a key factor influencing purchase decisions among players in Thailand.

Hypothesis 1.4: The hybrid game marketing model influences game purchase decisions in Thailand.

Divya (2024) stated that revenue generation models for game developers have evolved from traditional one-time purchases or subscription formats to hybrid models, which combine game sales, in-game item purchases, subscriptions, and advertising. This integrated approach enables companies to meet the needs of more diverse target groups and adapt strategies based on the behavior of each player segment.

Locke and Uhrinová (2017) described the evolution of game marketing across three primary eras: Traditional, Transitional, and Modern. They noted that in the Modern era, the hybrid model plays a critical role in providing strategic flexibility and value co-creation between developers and consumers. Unlike conventional sales or subscriptions, this model emphasizes continuous service delivery through additional content and enhanced features.

Molina et al. (2022) proposed the application of game theory to evaluate the efficiency of multi-channel attribution in

marketing. Their approach can be applied to hybrid models, enabling measurement of return on investment across various revenue formats, such as subscriptions, one-time purchases, and microtransactions.

Klimas (2017) stated that hybrid models have emerged as a strategic response by developers to the digital era. These models integrate revenue streams from paid, premium, subscription, freemium, and licensing channels to generate sustainable income while mitigating the risks associated with relying on a single revenue stream. This reflects the complex purchase decision-making processes of modern consumers.

Hypothesis 2: Promotional strategies influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand.

Wawrowski and Otol (2020) asserted that promoting games through social media using content marketing and audience engagement, on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, helps enhance brand loyalty and significantly increases the likelihood of consumer purchase decisions in the gaming market.

Taylor et al. (2019) suggested that integrating game theory with Monte Carlo simulations provides an effective framework for analyzing consumer purchasing behavior in various scenarios. This is particularly valuable in designing promotions, such as discounts or special offers, by using a payoff matrix to systematically evaluate the outcomes of promotional strategies.

Zheng et al. (2024) emphasized that promotional strategies in the gaming industry should be planned with a long-term perspective, such as using time-phased promotions to maintain the player base and boost sustained revenue. Their approach focuses on consistency and credibility as key drivers for repeat purchase behavior among consumers.

Du et al. (2021) referenced Honor of Kings as a case study, demonstrating that promotions tied to seasonal events, such as discounted skins, free item giveaways, and social media-driven campaigns, are highly effective in increasing player engagement and in-game purchases. These strategies highlight value for money and informal reward systems, which resonate with consumers.

Moorthy (1993) proposed that employing randomized pricing strategies introduces uncertainty into the market, encouraging consumers to make faster purchase decisions during promotional periods. This is particularly effective in the competitive gaming market, where players are motivated to participate in promotional campaigns to avoid missing the best offers.

Hypothesis 3: Consumer psychological factors influence game purchase decisions in Thailand.

Tovmasyan (2023) stated that psychological factors in consumer behavior can be explained through the influence of cognitive biases and cognitive dissonance, which affect how individuals process information and make purchase decisions. Consumers tend to buy products that align with their existing beliefs and often exhibit over-optimism about the outcomes of in-game purchases.

Kim (2016) analyzed purchasing behavior in the “gacha” system of Puzzle and Dragons, finding that decisions to spend money are driven by psychological reactions such as Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), the illusion of control, and emotional gratification. These are key motivational forces behind in-game purchasing decisions.

Assensoh-Kodua (2015) noted that psychological factors, particularly interactions via social networks, affect emotional perception, brand loyalty, and motivational triggers within digital media contexts. These elements influence purchase decisions, especially in games that emphasize player participation and online community engagement.

Wachirathamporn (2018) stated that the intention to purchase in-game items is strongly associated with multiple perceived psychological values, including enjoyment, value for money, and convenience. In particular, players who believe that such items enhance emotional satisfaction and gameplay experience are more likely to be motivated to make actual purchases.

Ajara (2017) observed that both emotional and rational motivations influence the decision to buy virtual goods in games. Key psychological drivers include pride, imitation, desire for uniqueness, and happiness derived from use - factors that often motivate players to make non-essential purchases for emotional or social gratification.

4. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The research framework of this study was designed to examine game marketing models that influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand. It is based on the research objectives and hypotheses and incorporates key variables derived from theoretical foundations and previous studies.

The independent variables are divided into three main groups:

(1) Game Marketing Models, which include One-Time Purchase, Subscription-Based Model, Free-to-Play & Microtransaction Model, and Hybrid Model.

(2) Promotion Strategies, such as discounts, online events, the use of influencers, and membership systems.

(3) Psychological Factors, such as perceived value, satisfaction from gameplay experience, and loyalty to the game or brand.

The dependent variable is the consumer purchase decision in Thailand, which is measured by purchase frequency, amount of in-game spending, influential factors, and spending behavior patterns within games.

This theoretical framework is based on the hypothesis that game marketing models, promotion strategies, and psychological factors are positively related to consumers' game purchase decisions. In other words, consumers who are exposed to diverse marketing formats (e.g., One-Time Purchase, Subscription, Free-to-Play, and Hybrid), together with well-perceived promotional strategies (e.g., discounts, events, influencer engagement), and who possess high levels of psychological motivation (e.g., perceived value, enjoyment, satisfaction, or intrinsic motivation), are more likely to decide to purchase games.

To examine these hypotheses, this study employs a quantitative research method, utilizing a questionnaire distributed to 400 gamers in Thailand. The data collected will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlation analysis, to identify statistically significant relationships between the dependent and independent variables.

This conceptual framework not only aims to test theoretical hypotheses but also seeks to offer practical implications for stakeholders in the gaming industry. By understanding the factors influencing purchase decisions, businesses can design more effective marketing strategies tailored to Thai consumers' behaviors and motivations, ultimately increasing game sales, enhancing brand loyalty, and sustainably expanding market share.

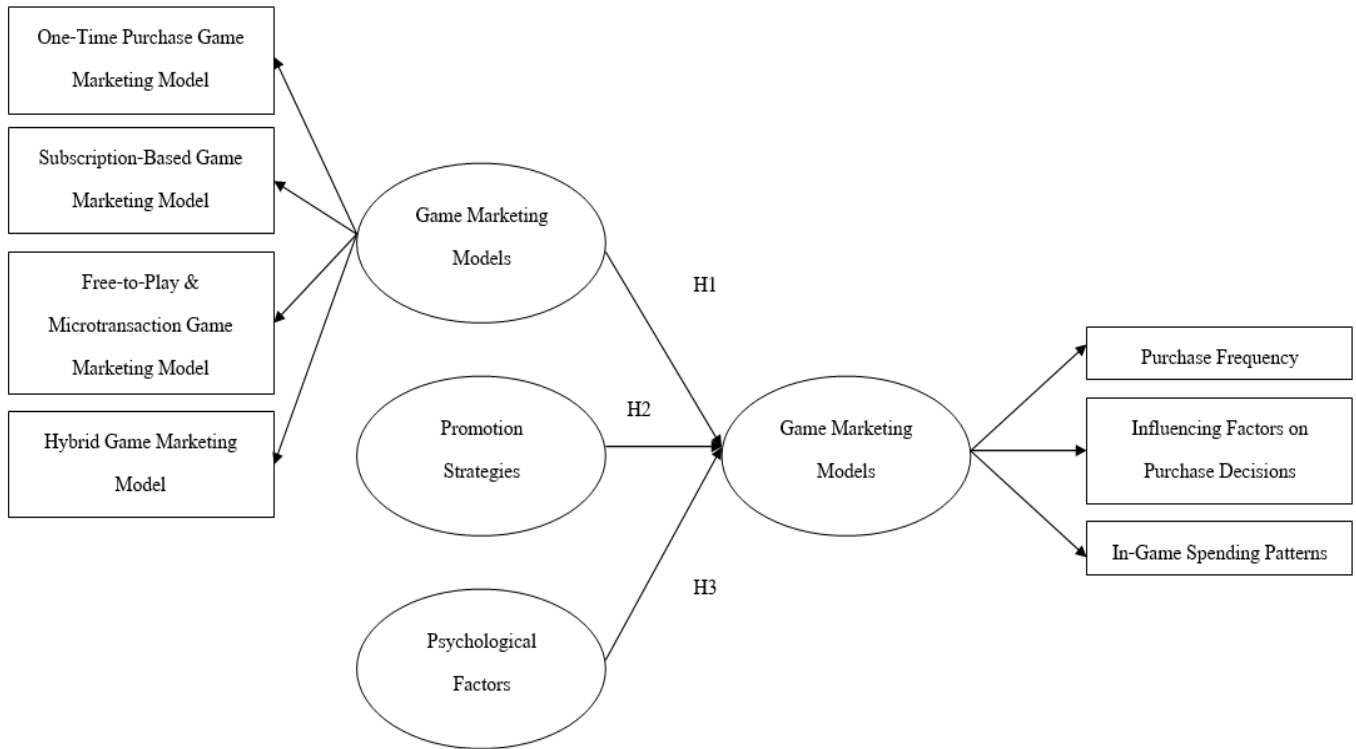


Figure 1: Research framework.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed a quantitative method using a survey design to examine the relationships among game marketing models, promotion strategies, and psychological factors of consumers that influence game purchase decisions in Thailand. Data were collected using a systematically developed questionnaire and analyzed through both descriptive and inferential statistics. The population of this study consisted of 400 gamers in Thailand. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, focusing on individuals with gaming experience and behavior related to game purchase decisions to ensure depth and reliability of the data.

The primary research instrument was a questionnaire divided into four sections, with A 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Section 1: Demographic information, including gender, age, education level, average monthly income, and gaming behavior.

Section 2: Perceptions of game marketing models, such as One-Time Purchase, Subscription-Based, Free-to-Play with Microtransactions, and Hybrid Model, and their influence on purchase decisions.

Section 3: Opinions on promotional strategies, such as discounts, giveaways, promotional events, and the use of influencers that affect purchase decisions.

Section 4: Psychological factors, such as perceived value, satisfaction, expectations, and motivations related to purchasing.

Content validity of the questionnaire was evaluated by three experts, with an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) score of 0.60 or higher. The questionnaire was pilot tested with 30 respondents, and its reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded scores greater than 0.70 for all variables.

Data were collected online via Google Forms and distributed through various channels, such as LINE and Facebook, during March to April 2025. Both primary and secondary data were utilized to support the research objectives. The data analysis was divided into two parts: 1) Descriptive Statistics were used to describe demographic data of gamers in Thailand, presented in terms of percentages, means, and standard deviations, and 2) Inferential Statistics were used to analyze the relationships between game marketing models, promotion strategies, and psychological factors, using correlation analysis. All data were processed using SPSS to ensure accuracy and reliability of the results.

6. RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1: Research findings.

Objective	Research findings
To study game marketing models that influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand	The analysis revealed that consumers respond differently to various game marketing models, including One-Time Purchase, Subscription-Based, Free-to-Play with Microtransactions, and Hybrid Model. Among these, the model that received the most favorable response from consumers was the Free-to-Play with Microtransactions model. This is because it allows players to try the game for free before deciding whether to spend money on additional content or in-game items, which reduces the risk of making an unsatisfactory purchase and enhances the perception of value. However, the Loot Box system within this model did not attract much interest from players. The study also found that the One-Time Purchase and Subscription-Based models were similarly valued by consumers.
To study promotion strategies that influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand	The study found that well-designed promotion strategies can significantly influence consumers' game purchase decisions. Strategies that received the most positive responses included game discounts, in-game item or reward giveaways, free trials or demos, influencer marketing, limited-time promotions (flash sales), and interactive marketing through social media channels. Additionally, collaborations with other games or well-known brands also had a notable impact on purchase decisions. However, daily login rewards and pre-order bonuses exclusive to early buyers showed only a moderate effect on influencing consumer decisions.
To study psychological factors that influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand	Psychological factors such as perceived value, emotional satisfaction, enjoyment, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation all influence consumer purchase behavior in Thailand. Consumers who are driven by intrinsic motivation, such as the feeling of personal growth, skill development, or social interaction within the game, are more likely to decide to purchase games or spend money to enhance their gaming experience. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivations, such as receiving rewards, achieving visible success, gaining acceptance from fellow players, or engaging in competition, also act as significant drivers in purchase decision-making.
Hypotheses	Research findings
The One-Time Purchase game marketing model affects game purchase decisions in Thailand.	The study found that this group of consumers places high importance on permanent game ownership and complete game content. Respondents in this group are often experienced players who prefer to purchase games that do not require repeated payments or subscriptions. The analysis showed that they are more likely to make a purchase when they have access to comprehensive game information, positive reviews, and a reasonable price.
The Subscription-based game marketing model affects game purchase decisions in Thailand.	The research also found that the subscription model is well received by consumers who value continuous access to diverse and regularly updated content. This is especially true for players seeking modern gaming experiences without having to invest heavily in each individual title. Monthly or yearly subscription plans were perceived as a "valuable" option that helps reduce the risk of spending money on games that may not meet user expectations.
The Free-to-Play and Microtransaction game marketing model affects game purchase decisions in Thailand.	The findings also revealed that a large group of consumers, particularly teenagers and mobile gamers, responded positively to the Free-to-Play model. This format allows players to try the game before deciding to pay for in-game items, skins, or additional content. Although many users initially spend nothing, the design of game mechanics, such as incentive systems, special events, and appealing in-game items, can significantly encourage purchase behavior.
The Hybrid game marketing model affects game purchase decisions in Thailand.	The results further indicated that consumers who responded to the hybrid model typically had prior gaming experience and moderate-to-high income levels. These players value flexibility and prefer to pay only when necessary, such as purchasing a base game at a low cost and later paying for downloadable content (DLC) or subscribing during promotional periods. The study showed that the hybrid model provides high satisfaction and encourages long-term repeat purchases.
Promotion strategies affect consumer purchase decisions in Thailand.	The research found that promotional strategies have a direct impact on game purchase behavior. In particular, the use of influencers or YouTubers effectively drives consumers toward making a purchase. Marketing strategies such as holiday discounts, free trials, giveaways, and influencer marketing can effectively generate interest and purchasing motivation. Furthermore, consumers showed strong interest in limited-time offers (flash sales) and in-game activities that provide exclusive rewards to buyers or participants, which clearly accelerate the decision-making process. Social media marketing also plays a crucial role in spreading information and stimulating consumer desire in the digital age.

Psychological factors affect game purchase decisions in Thailand.

The analysis indicated that psychological factors are key variables directly influencing game purchasing behavior, especially for in-game item purchases. These behaviors are often driven by internal needs, such as desire, enjoyment, challenge, social interaction, and a sense of achievement. Consumers who feel that the game fulfills their emotional needs, such as providing relaxation, fun, or a sense of pride, are more likely to spend money compared to those who play only to pass time. Additionally, external motivations, such as special rewards or peer recognition, can effectively trigger short-term purchase decisions.

7. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the relationships among game marketing models, promotion strategies, and psychological factors that influence consumer game purchase decisions in Thailand. The research focused on the impact of different business models, including One-Time Purchase, Subscription-Based, Free-to-Play with Microtransactions, and Hybrid Models, as well as marketing strategies used to attract consumers and the psychological drivers behind purchasing behavior. The findings revealed that game marketing models significantly influence purchase decisions, especially the Free-to-Play model with microtransactions and the Hybrid Model, which combines one-time payments and in-game purchases. These models were well-received by consumers who valued spending flexibility and the ability to try the game before committing financially. Consumers emphasized value, ownership, and the freedom to decide when and how to pay, making games that align with these preferences more likely to be purchased.

Promotion strategies such as discounts, giveaways, special events, and influencer marketing on social media were positively associated with consumer purchase decisions, particularly among those with prior gaming purchase experience. Strategies that created a sense of urgency or additional value, such as limited-time offers or exclusive in-game bonuses, effectively motivated short-term purchases. Promotions timed to match peak usage periods, such as holidays or special events, had a clear impact on sales and repeat purchases. Regarding psychological factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations played a key role in influencing purchase decisions. Intrinsic motivations, such as enjoyment, challenge, pride, and social interaction, fostered emotional connection and long-term engagement with the game. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivations, such as receiving rewards, rare items, or social recognition, encouraged more temporary or occasional spending. Both types of motivation were positively correlated with purchase behavior, though intrinsic motivation had a stronger impact on loyalty and sustained spending.

When comparing the influence of game marketing models, promotion strategies, and psychological factors, the results indicated that psychological factors, especially intrinsic motivations such as enjoyment, in-game success, and autonomy, were the strongest drivers of long-term purchase behavior. Promotion strategies served as short-term stimulants that increased the likelihood of purchase, while game marketing models provided the structural framework that shaped patterns of repeat spending and in-game engagement. Statistical analysis confirmed that understanding and designing game business models that address psychological motivations, combined with the use of effective promotional strategies, can help developers expand their customer base, increase revenue, and maintain long-term consumer engagement sustainably. In conclusion, game purchase decisions among Thai consumers are influenced by the integration of marketing models, promotional strategies, and psychological factors. When these elements are strategically aligned, game businesses can achieve sustainable growth in an increasingly competitive market.

8. DISCUSSION

The research findings corresponding to Objectives 1, 2, and 3 are as follows:

Objective 1: To study game marketing models that influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand.

The results indicated that different game marketing models, namely One-Time Purchase, Subscription-Based, Free-to-Play & Microtransaction, and Hybrid Model, all have a statistically significant impact on consumer game purchase decisions in Thailand. Consumers responded differently depending on their preferences, spending capacity, and gaming frequency. This aligns with the concept proposed by Lu and LaRiviere (2021), who noted that subscription systems allow consumers to access games at lower costs and promote long-term brand loyalty, as consumers have the opportunity to try a variety of games without having to commit to a full purchase.

Additionally, Svård (2021) supported the idea that the growth of subscription-based gaming platforms such as Xbox Game Pass and Apple Arcade has led the subscription model to become a mainstream option among modern players, particularly those who prioritize access over ownership. This view is consistent with the perspective of Homburg et al. (2022), who emphasized that hybrid models, combining one-time purchase, microtransactions, and supplementary services, can meet the needs of new consumer segments seeking flexible consumption and personal budget control.

Furthermore, the study found that the Free-to-Play & Microtransaction model had the highest influence among consumers aged 18–25. This finding is in line with Zagal et al. (2020), who argued that microtransaction systems designed to match players' emotions and motivations can successfully encourage in-game purchases even when the base game is free to play.

Overall, the findings related to Objective 1 demonstrate that game marketing models clearly affect consumer purchase decisions. These models allow for the segmentation of consumers based on their responses to different business models, supporting the concepts and theories found in the literature. This insight can be strategically applied to the effective design of game distribution models in the Thai market.

Objective 2: To study promotion strategies that influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand.

The findings revealed that promotion strategies have a statistically significant impact on consumers' decisions to purchase games in Thailand. Strategies that emphasize price discounts, reward-based activities, limited-time offers, and the use of influencers or social media to attract attention were all found to influence consumer purchasing behavior, especially among mobile gamers and users of digital platforms.

These findings are consistent with the concept presented by Kotler and Keller (2016), who defined sales promotion as a marketing tool aimed at generating short-term sales through activities that offer temporary incentives or added value to consumers. Such strategies are effective in encouraging product trials and repeat purchases, particularly in highly competitive

industries like digital gaming.

In addition, the study by Müller-Lankenau et al. (2004) indicated that digital promotion strategies, such as offering in-game discount codes or rewards for returning users, significantly motivate consumers to make purchases. The sense of urgency created by phrases such as “limited stock” and “limited time offer” was shown to accelerate decision-making among players, as clearly observed in the behavior of the sample group.

In conclusion, promotion strategies influence purchase decisions in ways that can be effectively planned and managed, especially when tailored to match the gaming behavior of the target audience and designed to convey strong value from the consumer's perspective. The results of this study align with the reviewed literature and reinforce the importance of psychologically driven strategies in boosting sales within the gaming industry.

Objective 3: To study psychological factors that influence consumer purchase decisions in Thailand.

The findings revealed that psychological factors have a statistically significant influence on game purchase behavior, particularly in areas such as expectations, motivation, perceived value, self-achievement, and community involvement. These dimensions contribute to consumers' willingness to pay for or support games that fulfill their psychological needs.

This result aligns with the concept proposed by Deci and Ryan (2000) in their Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes that intrinsic motivation, such as personal satisfaction, achievement, and self-improvement, plays a more critical role in influencing decisions than extrinsic motivation, such as rewards or promotions. The study found that consumers who play games for personal enjoyment and challenge are more likely to make purchases or spend money in-game, as they feel the game provides “value” and a sense of “engagement.”

Moreover, the psychological trigger of “Fear of Missing Out” (FOMO), often stimulated by time-limited events or exclusive rewards, also emerged as a significant motivator. This is consistent with the findings of Wu et al. (2020), who stated that time-sensitive reward systems can effectively prompt purchasing decisions.

Comparative analysis further indicated that psychological factors play a vital role in driving game purchase behavior, particularly when these factors are tied to players' emotional experiences. This is strongly supported by the literature in areas such as motivation theory, game design, and digital consumer behavior. Therefore, it can be concluded that any marketing strategy that effectively resonates with players' intrinsic motivations and sense of self-worth is likely to be more successful in the Thai gaming market.

9. RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

This research makes a significant contribution to expanding the body of knowledge on consumer behavior in the gaming industry, particularly within the context of Thailand, where there is a limited number of in-depth studies analyzing the relationship between game marketing models, promotional strategies, and psychological factors on consumer purchasing decisions. The study presents a comprehensive and well-structured conceptual framework to analyze the various factors influencing game-buying behavior in a highly competitive digital era.

In the area of consumer psychology, this research affirms the pivotal role of intrinsic motivation, such as perceived value, challenge, achievement, and social engagement within games, as a primary driver of consumers' willingness to invest both time and money in games that align with their internal values. At the same time, extrinsic motivations such as promotions, rewards, and in-game status were found to be effective in encouraging short-term purchasing behavior.

The insights gained from this study not only enhance the understanding of game purchasing behavior in the Thai market but also serve as a foundation for developing future theoretical models in consumer behavior, game marketing strategy, and behavioral economics. Therefore, this research offers valuable academic and practical contributions, particularly for game developers, marketers, and scholars seeking to design sustainable business strategies that effectively respond to the motivations of modern consumers.

10. RECOMMENDATION

1. Social environmental variables should be added, such as peer influence, reviews from influencers, or trends in online communities, as these factors may have direct or indirect effects on game purchasing decisions, particularly among teenagers and young adults. Integrating media-related and group behavior factors would provide a more dynamic and accurate picture of consumer decision-making in the context of the digital society.
2. A mixed methods research approach is recommended, combining quantitative surveys with in-depth interviews or focus group discussions to explore players' psychological motivations in greater depth. Obtaining insights from personal perspectives and real-life experiences would help reveal the behavioral reasons and underlying attitudes behind game purchasing decisions more comprehensively.
3. A comparative study between different types of games (e.g., mobile games, console games, and PC games) should be conducted, as each player group has significantly different behavior, playing frequency, and purchase motivations. This type of comparison would help better understand the relationship between marketing models and consumer behavior in each game category and enable the design of more effective, targeted marketing strategies.
4. A longitudinal study should be conducted to track changes in player behavior over time in response to shifts in technology or marketing formats, such as the emergence of new subscription platforms, pricing adjustments, or policy changes by game publishers. It should also consider major events that impact consumer behavior. Such a study would provide a comprehensive understanding of how time and context influence purchasing decisions.

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