



## SHOPPE GAMES: HOW SHOPPE UTILIZES GAMIFICATION TO INCREASE APP UPTIME

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Article info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Corresponding Author:</b></p> <p>Nurjulya Ningsih  <a href="mailto:nurjulyaningsih81@gmail.com">nurjulyaningsih81@gmail.com</a>            Department of Management.            University of Muhammadiyah            Bengkulu</p>	<p>This study examines how Shopee leverages gamification to increase user engagement, particularly by enhancing the time spent on its application. The research employs a qualitative approach with a literature review method, analyzing relevant studies on gamification in e-commerce. Findings reveal that gamification elements such as rewards, challenges, and social interaction significantly contribute to prolonged app usage. Rewards motivate users with tangible incentives, challenges create engaging experiences through progressively difficult tasks, and social interaction fosters connections through competition and collaboration. These results align with Self-Determination Theory and Flow Theory, which emphasize the role of fulfilling psychological needs and creating immersive experiences in driving engagement. The study provides practical insights for app developers, highlighting the importance of designing effective gamification strategies to enhance user retention and loyalty. However, limitations include the absence of primary empirical data, suggesting future research should explore the direct impact of gamification on diverse user demographics through quantitative or mixed-method approaches.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>gamification, user engagement, e-commerce, Shopee, application design</i></p>
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### INTRODUCTION

The Shopee app has become one of the leading e-commerce platforms in Southeast Asia, with constantly evolving innovations to retain and increase its user engagement. One strategy that has drawn attention is the implementation of gamification through features such as Shopee Games, including “Shopee Tanam,” “Shopee Lucky Prize,” and others. The concept of gamification, which combines game elements with user experience, has been proven to not only increase the time users spend in-app but also strengthen loyalty and repurchase intentions. This is consistent with the findings of Taruli et al. (2020), which showed that gamification has a significant influence on user engagement in Bandung.

Gamification in the context of e-commerce marketing has an interesting theoretical foundation. Elements such as competition, rewards, and achievements provide users with unique experiences, which in turn influence positive emotions and consumer behavior. For example, research by Eldhia & Iriyanti (2022) concluded that gamification and enjoyment

factors play an important role in increasing Shopee users' purchase intention. In addition, Jeremiah & Tarigan (2023) asserted that gamification has a direct impact on consumer loyalty, which is an important asset for platforms like Shopee to remain competitive amidst the increasingly fierce competition.

However, while there are many studies highlighting the influence of gamification on user engagement and loyalty, there is still a gap in understanding how specific elements of gamification, such as game design or social interactions, directly affect the length of time users spend in an app. Most research focuses on the impact of gamification on purchase intent or loyalty, while the time-in-app aspect is often considered a secondary consequence rather than the primary focus. In fact, in today's digital landscape, user attention and time are very valuable assets for technology companies (Dahana, 2024).

The urgency of this research becomes even more apparent when we consider the trend of increasing technology adoption among both urban and rural communities in Indonesia. Shopee has successfully bridged the digital divide through its gamification initiative, which not only attracts new users but also retains existing users through an entertaining experience. As stated by Fitriani & Winda (2023), the app successfully creates a balance between entertainment elements and purposeful shopping behavior.

This research aims to analyze how Shopee leverages gamification to increase its users' app usage time. By combining theoretical and empirical perspectives, this study attempts to answer the question: which gamification elements are most effective in increasing the duration of app usage time, and how does this experience affect overall user loyalty? This study is expected to make new contributions to the gamification literature, particularly in the context of e-commerce in Southeast Asia, as well as provide practical insights for app developers and digital marketers to design more effective gamification strategies.

As such, this study not only fills an existing gap in the literature but also provides relevant practical implications amidst the rapid growth of digital technology. The results of this study are expected to help Shopee and similar platforms in optimizing their gamification strategies to improve user engagement and experience.

## **METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method to analyze how gamification in the Shopee application increases the time users spend using the application. This research design is descriptive-analytical, which aims to understand the phenomenon of gamification through literature review from various trusted sources, including scientific journals, books, and related research reports.

The research population includes all previous studies that discuss gamification in the context of e-commerce, specifically those relevant to the Shopee app. The research sample was purposively selected, based on criteria such as relevant topics, reliability of sources, and publications within the last five years. Some key references were taken from journals such as the works of Eldhia & Iriyanti (2022), Taruli et al. (2020), and Jeremiah & Tarigan (2023), which reviewed the impact of gamification on user engagement and consumer loyalty.

The data collection technique involved searching, categorizing and analyzing relevant literature using a content analysis approach. The data was analyzed thematically to identify the elements of gamification that most influenced the time duration of app usage, as well as how they relate to theories of motivation and consumer behavior.

This research model focuses on the relationship between gamification elements (such as rewards, challenges, and social interaction) and app usage time. The symbols in the model, such as gamification elements as the independent variable and usage time as the dependent variable, are used to describe the causal relationships identified from the literature review. This approach is expected to provide deep theoretical insights and support practical recommendations for app developers in designing effective gamification strategies.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The literature analysis shows that gamification elements such as rewards, challenges, and social interaction have a significant influence on the time duration of app usage. Table 1 summarizes the analysis results of some relevant previous studies.

**Table 1. Gamification Elements and Their Impact on App Usage**

Elements of Gamification	Impact on Application Usage	References
Rewards	Increase user motivation to participate	Fitriani & Winda (2023)
Challenges	Increase interaction time through difficulty	Eldhia & Iriyanti (2022)
Social Interaction	Increase loyalty through competition and cooperation	Taruli et al. (2020)

### *Linkage of Results and Basic Concepts*

These results support Self-Determination Theory and Flow Theory, where the fulfillment of autonomy, competence, and social connectedness needs are the basis for successful gamification. Shopee users feel intrinsic motivation through virtual rewards and enjoyable experiences, thus increasing the app usage time (Yunita & Indrajit, 2022). In addition, the flow state created through games with challenging difficulty levels encourages users to continue engaging (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

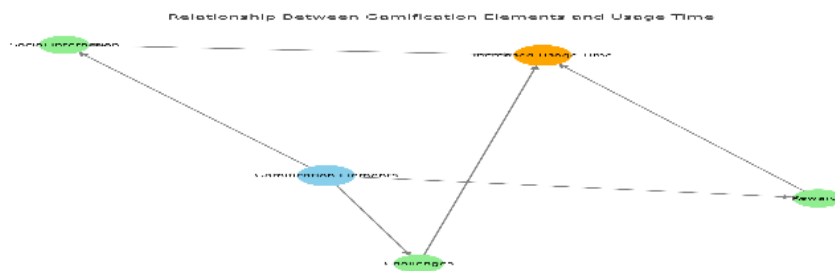
### *Compatibility with Previous Research*

This study is consistent with Eldhia & Iriyanti's (2022) findings that enjoyment and gamification elements influence online shopping intentions. However, this result differs from Dahana's (2024) criticism, which states that gamification can create ambiguity between entertainment and utility, which was not detected in this study.

### *Research Implications*

Theoretically, this study strengthens the literature on gamification by emphasizing the importance of specific elements in increasing user engagement. Appliedly, these results provide guidance for app developers to optimize game design, such as enhancing social interaction through engaging competition features.

**Chart 1. Relationship between Gamification Elements and Application Usage Time**



These results show that gamification, through well-designed elements, can significantly increase user engagement, both in terms of usage time and app loyalty.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that gamification elements such as rewards, challenges, and social interactions play an important role in increasing the time duration of using the Shopee app. Rewards provide immediate incentives that motivate users to continue participating, while challenges with gradual difficulty levels create an immersive and fun experience. Social interaction through competition and cooperation also strengthens user engagement with the app, creating a deeper connection between the user and the platform. These findings are in line with motivational theories such as Self-Determination Theory and Flow Theory, which suggest that experiences that meet basic psychological needs and create a state of flow can encourage higher engagement. Practically, the results of this study provide recommendations for app developers to optimize gamification elements by prioritizing designs that provide attractive incentives, balanced challenges, and immersive social interaction features. Strategic use of these elements not only increases the time duration of app usage but can also strengthen consumer loyalty. This research also indicates that Shopee has successfully created a balance between entertainment and utility value through its gamification, which can serve as a model for other e-commerce platforms. However, this study has limitations in its literature-based qualitative approach, so the results are more descriptive and do not include direct empirical data from app users. Future research is expected to involve quantitative or mixed methods with primary data to measure the impact of gamification in more depth. In addition, further exploration of how gamification affects certain demographic segments or user preferences could provide additional insights that are more specific and applicable. As such, this research opens opportunities for the development of more inclusive and effective gamification strategies in the e-commerce industry.

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