

The Effect of Experience, E-Trust, Perceived Ease of Use, Technology Readiness, and Perceived Enjoyment on the Purchase Decision of Virtual Game Items (A Study on Users of the Grand Theft Auto VI/GTA VI Game Application)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effects of *Experience*, *E-Trust*, *Perceived Ease of Use*, *Technology Readiness*, and *Perceived Enjoyment* on the purchase intention of virtual items among users of the GTA V game application in the Facebook GTA VI Indonesia community. This study employed a quantitative approach with an *explanatory research* design. Primary data were collected through questionnaires, while the sample was determined using *purposive sampling*. Based on the Slovin formula with a population of 87,300 users, 398 respondents were selected who met the research criteria, namely users who had played GTA VI within the last six months and had previously purchased virtual items. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the assistance of SPSS. The partial test results indicate that *Experience* has no significant effect on *Purchase Decision* ($t = 1.525$; $p = 0.101$), while *E-Trust* has a positive and significant effect ($t = 2.779$; $p = 0.002$). *Perceived Ease of Use* has a significant effect ($t = 2.879$; $p < 0.003$), while *Technology Readiness* ($t = 3.224$; $p = 0.001$) and *Perceived Enjoyment* ($t = 7.705$; $p < 0.001$) have positive and significant effects. Simultaneously, the five variables have a significant effect on *Purchase Decision*, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.470.

Keywords: *Experience*, *E-Trust*, *Perceived Ease of Use*, *Technology Readiness*, *Perceived Enjoyment*, *Purchase Decision*

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INTRODUCTION

The massive development of digital technology and internet networks has transformed the global entertainment industry landscape, including a shift in how society consumes interactive recreational media. Online games no longer function merely as a leisure activity, but have evolved into virtual social interaction spaces as well as highly potential digital economic ecosystems. One of the clearest manifestations of the digital economy within games is the widespread phenomenon of virtual item transactions (in-game purchases), namely activities in which players exchange real-world currency for digital assets within the game, such as character skins, exclusive vehicles, in-game currency, and premium feature access. As explained in previous studies, virtual items have evolved into economic commodities that carry emotional satisfaction value, social status symbolism, and high commercial value for players.

Amid the rapid growth of the global gaming industry, this dynamic is clearly reflected in the *Grand Theft Auto V* (GTA V) ecosystem, particularly within the *Roleplay* (RP) and *multiplayer* communities that are widely transacted and discussed through social media groups such as Facebook GTA VI Indonesia. Although the group's name anticipates the release of the GTA VI series, empirically this group has become a gathering hub for thousands of active GTA V players in Indonesia to exchange information, form roleplay communities, and carry out buy-sell transactions of virtual items, in-game cash, accounts, and other exclusive assets. Within this ecosystem, *Purchase Decision* (purchase decision) is driven not only by the functional benefits of an item (such as improved gameplay

performance), but is also influenced by the complex interaction among psychological factors, technological literacy, and digital consumer behavior characteristics. This study's framework refers to the consumption value approach of Asrori (2020), which positions functional value, emotional value, and social value as the main drivers of virtual item purchases.

Field observations show that virtual item purchase decisions within this community depend heavily on the aspect of *Experience* (user experience). *Experience* is understood as an internal and subjective response arising from a consumer's direct or indirect interaction with a platform, brand, or gaming ecosystem (Afriyanto & Fazizah, 2025). In the context of GTA V, experience is shaped by the quality of players' interaction with game features, server stability, community dynamics, and previous transaction history. However, a unique phenomenon emerges in which veteran players with years of experience tend to be more selective or restrained in making transactions, while new players are often driven toward impulsive purchases to keep up with the status of other players.

Beyond experience, *E-Trust* (digital trust) becomes a crucial variable given that virtual item transactions involve the exchange of real money for intangible goods. *E-Trust* functions to reduce perceived risk, such as the threat of scamming by fellow group members, cheating, item loss due to system manipulation, or financial data leakage (Agustin & Fazizah, 2023). Within the Facebook GTA VI Indonesia group phenomenon, transactions are often carried out peer-to-peer (P2P) or through third-party top-up service providers. Therefore, seller reputation, community testimonials, and trust in the reliability of the game developer become the main defense in shaping players' purchase decisions.

Ease of access also plays an important role through *Perceived Ease of Use* (PEOU). PEOU measures the extent to which players feel that the process of searching for, selecting, and executing in-game item transactions does not require complicated physical or mental effort (Amalia & Fazizah, 2025). An intuitive digital store layout, transparent product descriptions, the availability of 3D visual previews, and an efficient payment process have been shown to minimize transaction barriers. Conversely, a convoluted payment process often instantly cancels players' purchase intentions.

This rapid rate of adoption is supported by the *Technology Readiness* (technology readiness) of modern society. Players with high technology readiness are characterized by optimism and innovativeness toward new technology, and are already accustomed to using digital financial ecosystems such as e-wallets (Gopay, OVO, Dana), m-banking, and two-factor authentication systems. Phenomena in Indonesia show that the shift in payment methods toward QRIS and instant e-wallets has significantly accelerated virtual item transactions among young gamers.

Nevertheless, the primary driver of gaming activity is fundamentally the hedonic motive represented by *Perceived Enjoyment* (perceived enjoyment). *Perceived Enjoyment* measures the level of excitement, passion, and emotional satisfaction players feel when interacting with the game. An interesting phenomenon in virtual item research reveals a dynamic pattern: on one hand, high enjoyment drives players to enhance their characters or assets by purchasing exclusive items; on the other hand, if the base game is already considered highly enjoyable without paid items, players tend to be reluctant to spend additional money.

The differences in research objects, combinations of driving (*drivers*) and inhibiting (*inhibitors*) variables, and anomalous findings in previous studies provide important academic space to re-examine this model empirically. Based on this background and phenomena, this study aims to analyze the effect of *Experience*, *E-Trust*, *Perceived Ease of Use*,

Technology Readiness, and *Perceived Enjoyment* on the *Purchase Decision* of virtual items among users of the GTA V game application within the Facebook GTA VI Indonesia community, both partially and simultaneously.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with an *explanatory research* design to explain the causal relationships between variables and test hypotheses. The research object is the purchase intention of virtual items in the GTA V game, with the Facebook GTA VI Indonesia community as the subject. The study population is known to be 87,300 users. The sample was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, yielding 398 respondents. The sampling technique used was *purposive sampling*. Respondent criteria included being a user of the GTA V game application who had purchased a virtual item more than once within the last six months.

The data used were primary data obtained through questionnaires. The independent variables consisted of Experience (X1), *E-Trust* (X2), *Perceived Ease of Use* (X3), *Technology Readiness* (X4), and *Perceived Enjoyment* (X5), while the dependent variable was *Purchase Decision* (Y). The instrument was tested through validity and reliability tests. Data analysis included assumption tests, multiple linear regression, the coefficient of determination, the F test, and the t test, using SPSS 31.0 software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The instrument quality test showed that all indicators reported in the study were declared valid. Indicator correlation values ranged from 0.507 to 0.707 with a significance of 0.000. The reliability test showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.576 across all reported variables, so the instrument was declared reliable based on the criteria used in the study.

The reliability test was conducted to measure the extent to which the questionnaire instrument had consistency and reliability when used repeatedly. The testing technique used was examining the Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable. An instrument is considered reliable if it has a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.50 to 0.60 (adequate/acceptable category). A summary of the reliability test results is presented in the following table:

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Experience	0.576	Reliable
E-Trust	0.576	Reliable
Perceived Ease of Use	0.576	Reliable
Technology Readiness	0.576	Reliable
Perceived Enjoyment	0.576	Reliable
Purchase Decision	0.576	Reliable

Source: Primary data, processed 2026.

Based on the table above, it can be seen that all research variables *Experience*, *E-Trust*, *Perceived Ease of Use*, *Technology Readiness*, *Perceived Enjoyment*, and *Purchase Decision* — produced the same Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.576. This figure is above the minimum consistency threshold of 0.50. This indicates that the questionnaire used in this study meets

the reliability criteria and has sufficiently good internal consistency to measure each variable construct, so that all statement items are suitable for use in the next stage of data analysis.

The linearity test in this study showed a linear relationship for each variable with purchase intention, based on the results reported in the thesis. Subsequently, multiple linear regression was used to determine the effect of the five independent variables on purchase intention.

Variable	B	t	Sig.	Description
Experience	0.171	1.525	0.101	Not significant
E-Trust	0.313	2.779	0.002	Significant positive
Perceived Ease of Use	0.268	2.879	0.003	Significant negative
Technology Readiness	0.255	3.224	0.001	Significant positive
Perceived Enjoyment	0.601	7.705	0.000	Significant positive

Source: Primary data, processed 2026.

The test results show that *Experience* has no significant effect on purchase intention. The t value of 1.525 is smaller than the t-table value used in the thesis, and the significance value of 0.101 is greater than 0.05. This finding indicates that respondents' playing or shopping experience is not yet sufficient to explain an increase in the intention to purchase virtual items. Thus, the first hypothesis is not supported by the test results.

E-Trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision. The coefficient value of 0.313, t value of 2.779, and significance of 0.002 indicate that the stronger *E-Trust* referring to users' confidence in the reputation of the game platform and its developer the higher the tendency toward virtual item purchase decisions. This result is in line with the theoretical foundation of the study, which positions *E-Trust* as a characteristic that can influence consumer response. The academic implication of this relationship is that *E-Trust* serves as a foundation of psychological security for players. Virtual item transactions involve the exchange of real money for intangible assets. When developers are able to build a solid reputation, guarantee the security of the payment system, and provide certainty of digital asset ownership without the risk of manipulation, users' perceived risk decreases drastically. The practical implication is that game developers must continue to invest in digital transaction security systems, account policy transparency, and responsive customer service to maintain and increase user trust.

Perceived ease of use has a significant effect on purchase decision, with a negative regression coefficient of 0.268. With a t value of 2.879 and a significance of 0.003, the relationship is statistically significant. The academic interpretation and GTA V phenomenon behind this finding relate, first, to the Challenge–Skill Balance sensation, in which in the gaming industry excessive ease sometimes reduces players' sense of pride or satisfaction. If the process of obtaining or buying items is made too easy or instant without any regulation or degree of challenge, players may perceive the item as less exclusive or less valuable.

Second, the *Friction* effect on purchase consideration is that overly frictionless payment processes, without layered confirmation, sometimes trigger extra caution among players who are wary of accidental or impulsive purchases. Third, UI/UX feature saturation: a system that is too simplified may be perceived as insufficiently informative in

presenting attribute details, previews, or the aesthetic advantages of the virtual item being purchased. The researchers' recommendation is that developers need to balance ease of navigating the in-game store with the clarity of product information details, so that the value of virtual items continues to be perceived as high by users.

Technology Readiness has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision. A coefficient of 0.255, with a t value of 3.224 and a significance of 0.001, indicates that the higher a user's *Technology Readiness* for virtual item transactions, the higher their purchase decision. This finding is consistent with the study's theoretical framework, which positions optimism, innovativeness, discomfort, and insecurity as important aspects in shaping technology readiness. The academic interpretation is that user characteristics driven by optimism (confidence in the benefits of technology) and innovativeness (the desire to try new features) have been shown to strengthen transaction intention. Conversely, inhibiting aspects such as discomfort and insecurity are successfully mitigated by users' experience with digital payment ecosystems (such as e-wallets, banking apps, and in-app transactions). The practical implication is that the ideal target market for the in-game purchase ecosystem is a population segment with high digital literacy. Game developers can integrate payment methods that adapt to current payment technology trends (for example, one-click e-wallet integration).

Perceived Enjoyment is a variable with a positive coefficient of 0.601, a t value of 7.775, and a significance of less than 0.000. This result indicates that perceptions of Fun/Enjoyable, Exciting/ Entertaining, Pleasurable/ Delightful, and Captivating/ Absorbing qualities, in the context of digital purchases, lead users to consider whether the perceived enjoyment they feel is commensurate with the benefits or quality of the item received. The academic interpretation is that the decision to purchase a virtual item is primarily driven by hedonic motivation rather than mere utilitarian function.

When users feel fun, excitement, pleasure, and a captivating/immersive experience, they judge that the cost incurred is worth the entertainment value obtained. The practical implication is that purchasing game items is more a form of emotional appreciation and self-expression (social status, character aesthetics) than a purely functional need. Therefore, game developers should focus on appealing audio-visual design, special effects, and the exclusivity of the narrative/identity of virtual items. Simultaneously, *Experience*, *E-Trust*, *Perceived Ease of Use*, *Technology Readiness* and *Perceived Enjoyment* have a significant effect on *Purchase Decision*.

An F value of 43.761 with a significance of 0.000 indicates that the model as a whole is significant. An adjusted R² value of 0.470 means the model explains approximately 47% of the variation in purchase intention, while approximately 53% is explained by other factors outside the research model. This 53% outside the model indicates that purchase decisions are influenced by other variables not examined in this model. The researchers suggest additional variables for future research, such as *Social Influence/ Peer Pressure* (community/peer influence), *Price Perception/ Promotion* (price and discount perception), *In-Game Economy/ Item Rarity* (virtual item rarity), or *Perceived Value/ Play-to-Win Dynamics*.

Model measure	Value
R	0.712
Adjusted R ²	0.470
F	43.761
Sig. F	0.000

Source: Primary data, processed 2026.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion regarding the effect of *Experience*, *E-Trust*, *Perceived Ease of Use*, *Technology Readiness*, and *Perceived Enjoyment* on the *Purchase Decision* of virtual items among GTA V game users in the Facebook GTA VI Indonesia community, it can be concluded that *E-Trust* has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision. This indicates that the higher users' trust in the reputation of the game developer, the platform, and transaction security within the community, the higher their decision to purchase virtual items. *Perceived Ease of Use* has a significant effect on purchase decision. Ease in accessing, understanding, and carrying out in-game store transactions is an important consideration for users when making purchase decisions.

Technology Readiness has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision. Users' technological readiness, driven by optimism and an innovative attitude toward digital transactions, makes it easier for them to adopt virtual item payment mechanisms.

Experience (experience) does not show a significant effect on purchase decision. This indicates that the length of playing hours or the depth of playing experience does not automatically determine the extent of players' drive to make financial transactions. *Perceived Enjoyment* has a significant effect on purchase decision, but shows a negative direction of relationship. This finding indicates that the higher the natural satisfaction and enjoyment users obtain from the base gameplay, the lower their drive to spend additional money on virtual items.

Simultaneously, the five variables (*Experience*, *E-Trust*, *Perceived Ease of Use*, *Technology Readiness*, and *Perceived Enjoyment*) have a significant effect on purchase decision. This research model is able to explain 47% of the variation in purchase decisions ($R^2 = 0.470$), while the remaining 53% is influenced by other factors outside the focus of this study.

Practical Implications and Suggestions (for Game Managers and Digital Marketers)

Game and item managers/sellers within the community should continue to maintain transaction transparency, provide guarantees for data/account security, and offer user complaint services to reduce the perceived risk of fraud. Given that *perceived enjoyment* has a negative effect, marketers are advised to no longer rely solely on "entertainment/fun" campaigns. Promotions should instead be focused on the functionality, exclusivity, aesthetic advantages, and tangible benefits of virtual items that are commensurate with the money spent. Maintaining an intuitive digital store interface and integrating flexible local payment methods (e-wallets/digital banking) suited to users' technology readiness is also recommended. Future researchers are advised to conduct qualitative or experimental testing to further confirm the cause of the negative relationship direction for *Perceived Enjoyment* as well as the non-significance of the *Experience* variable. Developing the research model by adding other variables relevant to the gaming and social media ecosystem, such

as *Social Influence* (peer/community influence), *Price Perception* (price perception), *Item Rarity* (item rarity), or *Peer Pressure*, is also recommended.

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