

# DIGITAL SLAM DUNK: UNDERSTANDING COLLECTING DYNAMICS AND TENSIONS FOR DIGITAL COLLECTIBLES

**Bibek Guha Sarkar**

Indian Institute of Management Calcutta

**Saravana Jaikumar**

Indian Institute of Management Calcutta

Cite as:

Guha Sarkar Bibek, Jaikumar Saravana (2024), DIGITAL SLAM DUNK: UNDERSTANDING COLLECTING DYNAMICS AND TENSIONS FOR DIGITAL COLLECTIBLES. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 53rd, (119785)

Paper from the 53rd Annual EMAC Conference, Bucharest, Romania, May 28-31, 2024



# DIGITAL SLAM DUNK: UNDERSTANDING COLLECTING DYNAMICS AND TENSIONS FOR DIGITAL COLLECTIBLES

## **Abstract**

Blockchain technologies have transformed the practice of collecting by introducing NFT-based digital collectibles. The unfamiliar nature and uncertainty associated with these collectibles renders NFT collector markets fraught with tensions. Using paradox theory, we investigate the dynamics of digital collecting by examining how tensions manifest and get addressed in NFT markets. We carry out our study in the context of NBA Top Shot, a prominent marketplace for digital collectibles, and conduct a perform thematic analysis of consumer discourse related to NBA Top Shot from secondary textual data extracted from user discussion posts on Reddit. We find that three overarching paradoxical tensions permeate the NFT space - these are enlightened restlessness, enslaved freedom, and sanctimonious sacrilege. Our findings significantly contribute to existing marketing literature on collecting, and has important practical implications for NFT project creators, collectors, and marketplaces.

**Subject Areas:** *Consumer Behaviour, Diffusion of Innovations, Electronic Commerce and Internet Marketing, Entertainment Marketing*

**Track:** Digital Marketing & Social Media