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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

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PictoEZodit (E-Comic In Teaching Practice)

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Abstract — Learning auditing as a theory subject for accounting students can be very dull and mundane. The audit theory is commonly memorized by students from textbooks which is textual and challenging for the students to apply into real case scenarios. However the students have not yet been exposed to the audit working environment, hence lack knowledge of how to apply audit theory in practice. As a result, *PictoEZodit* was created as an interactive educational tool to address this issue. This “comic strips” makes use of visual images mostly pictorial as a learning tool and designed to be used in both offline and online classrooms. As such, *PictoEZodit* intended to create harmony between theoretical learning and the real working environment of auditing practices. This innovation aims to replace the traditional method of teaching audit subjects with a more enjoyable learning experience.

Keywords: *audit education, e-comic, interactive*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education today is very challenging and requires new techniques in teaching and learning process. The movement of new teaching and learning process covers within all tiers of education system from primary level to tertiary level. As for accounting students in the tertiary level, the new learning technique is expected to be practiced in order to create more joyful environment with more interest and attention particularly for theory papers such as auditing subjects. Previous study had proven that majority of students in the social science stream are more attracted towards experiential learning rather than traditional classroom style since they believed that the experiential learning assisted their learning and felt what they have learned could be applied elsewhere [1]. The traditional way of teaching auditing papers found to be very dull and mundane since this subject was merely technical and very descriptive, solely receiving information through oral presentation, fully memorizing notes from textbooks and only required to complete the assignments. Hence, accounting students feel pressure, bored and less interested in this subject which could affect their performance in the practical training semester. Students are unable to build up their self-confidence and competence during the audit training because they are unable to grasp the audit theory of the real audit working environment. Consequently, this creates some problems especially among the industry players (employers and professional accounting bodies) in having fresh accounting graduates with excellent soft skills, high critical thinking skills and a very good in problem solving skill.

Therefore, to address this issue, more interactive teaching tools and materials are required to be designed to facilitate accounting students in understanding better in a learning audit subject. *PictoEZodit* is created as one of the interactive educational tools which is based on comic strips using cartoon images to be used in the classroom either offline or online. The depiction of cartoons or comic strips can provide a joyful environment and make students think differently and encourage them to create their own. It is a visual media that covers a lot of humour either in the form of a single picture or series of pictures, captioned or non-captioned and can be seen in magazines, newspapers, books, and social media [2]. Prior research shown that learning through visual elements such as cartoons and comic strip could increase the student’s interest and intrinsic motivation,

and reduce boredom, academic stress and anxiety [2][3] Furthermore, cartoons materials can grab student’s attention to make them healthy and interested in learning and this approach could help the teachers to develop imaginative power amongst students by engaging proper knowledge, stimulating in critical thinking, supporting their own ideas and opinions as well as identifying other conceptions of a particular topic with cartoons [4]. Findings from [5] on the effects of educational practices using cartoons in learning outcome for social studies subjects indicated that teaching done with cartoons affect students’ achievements and knowledge retention positively since the use of cartoons have ensured the continuity of interest in this subject and make learning fun and understandable if these subjects are presented in more interactive form.

This paper is organized as follows whereby Section 1 addresses the introduction and background of the study. Section 2 discusses the objectives and significance of the study. Section 3 explains the methodology of development of *PictoEZodit*, Section 4 discusses results and findings, Section 5 highlights potential commercialisation of *PictoEZodit* and the last section concludes this paper.

II. OBJECTIVES AND SIGNIFICANCE

The objective of this innovation includes as one of the interactive learning tools for auditing subjects in order to assist accounting students to have better understanding for audit theory and be able to engage the knowledge in real life audit working environment particularly during their practical training semesters. Besides that, *PictoEZodit* offers a hands-on opportunity to understand the real scenario happening in the audit working environment and provide ways to solve the audit problems and issues. Learning through *PictoEZodit* is able to enhance the quality of soft skills among accounting students in critical thinking, problem solving and comprehension in a real audit working environment, thus being able to produce quality fresh accounting graduates for the benefit of industry players as a whole.

The significance of this innovation could add to the traditional learning method that has been provided in order to ensure audit knowledge is able to grasp comprehensively at the tertiary level. The demonstration of audit scenarios as presented in *PictoEZodit* is to facilitate students on how to apply the audit theory in a right manner effectively and efficiently. Educators should use *PictoEZodit* as one of the platform of audit learning either offline or online as this innovation intended to create harmony between theoretical learning and the real audit practices in the working environment, thus the learning activities become more assisted and joyful as this e-comic give a new insight towards understanding audit theory well among students.

III. METHODOLOGY

The idea to innovate audit teaching method initiated by our undergraduate student’s grievance on the hurdles they have to face in memorising and understanding the audit theories and laws. Hence a survey was conducted looking into students’ problems and preference in capturing their interest in learning audit subjects. Responses from 76 respondents showed that 88.2% facing difficulty in memorising and understanding MIA By-Laws, 98.7% agreed that no working experience makes this course even tougher and 69.7% prefers to have pictographic (ie:comics) to help them in the audit course (refer fig. 1)

PictoEZodit was created using web application “Pixton for Schools” that can be used to show characters that have different facial expressions and body positions which express emotions and make the subject look real and, therefore, the comic more realistic. A study evidenced that ‘Pixton for Schools’ appears to be the most complete web tool that can be used to create comic strips as it is richer in features, having extensive support in characters, emotions, postures and interface language selection [6]. Furthermore, this application supports collaborative work and offers many features in designing attractive e-comic strips.

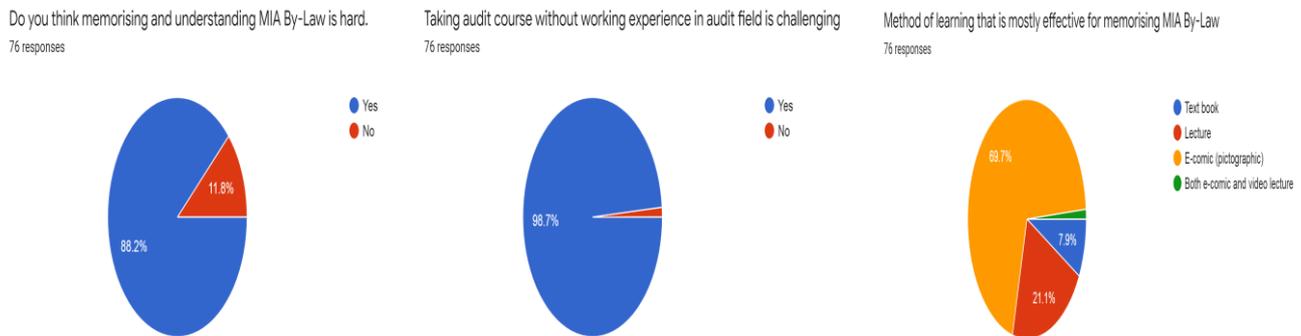


Figure 1: Pie chart result on audit learning method effectiveness.

IV. RESULT AND FINDINGS

The educational scenarios of *PictoEZodit* e-comics had been done efficiently by using the features available in the application. The comic strips developed show rich graphic design which helps enhance the original idea in delivering the story and thus, the results are more appealing. The comic strips then are exported as a set of images and further merged to build an

e-comic. This study merely focuses on the feasibility of developing an attractive and usable design of e-comic, and not on the actual impact on the learning process.

Figure 2 shows an example of educational scenarios developed using comic strips for the code of ethics of Gift and Hospitality for auditors in public practice. By observing different characters' facial expressions, and postures, the auditing subject looks appealing and realistic.



Figure 2 : Example of comic strips for *PictoEZodit*

1.

V. POTENTIAL COMMERCIALISATION

PictoEZodit has a good potential for commercialisation since none of the audit comics is available in the market today. The e-Comic Audit can become one of the references in audit subjects rather than solely using the audit textbooks. *PictoEZodit* is a new innovation of learning materials and can be accessed either through offline or online form. Since the market today towards digitalisation, the usage of e-book has been widely popular among younger generations including university students. Thus, *PictoEZodit* is expected to be available via online shopping platforms such as “Shopee” and “Lazada” applications as it could make an easy way for accessibility to own this e-book by everyone interested in seeking the audit knowledge.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the call for changes in accounting education required students to acquire the complete set of soft skills to become marketable among the industry players and employers. Using *PictoEZodit* as one of the learning materials offers accounting students an interactive experiential learning tool to complement the lecture-based lesson in facilitating them to understand better in audit theory and its application. The concept of experiential learning is proven to have positive impact in self efficacy, social support and motivation among students in tertiary level [7] and students are expected to feel these positive outcomes when learning is made through *PictoEZodit*. Additionally, some of the misconceptions on certain issues can be corrected using the concept of cartoons as it is a visual aid making the discussion of ideas related to daily life events with the cartoon style characters possible [3]. Hence, *PictoEZodit* is considered as an effective learning tool that can be practiced to relate with the real audit working environment and the audit theories and knowledge as presented in the textbook. However, there are some limitations in this innovation since not all parts of audit theories are able to demonstrate real audit working experience. Some of the audit theories require the understanding from textbooks as it is hardly to be presented in the comic form. Further research also can be done in order to test the effectiveness of using the e-comic in students' learning process.

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