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ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THROUGH SIMULATION GAME

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ABSTRACT

In the current gaming landscape, simulated skills and competencies vary according to the challenges present in a game. Offering different level of challenges, The Young Entrepreneur Network (YENT) is a simulation game for entrepreneurship experiential learning. This creative simulation game aims to introduce participants to various components such as entrepreneurship decision-making, venture management, financial management, and personal development. YENT's first phase was designed to provide information related to the services sector available in Malaysia. As the largest contributor to the country's economy, the services sector consists of wholesale and retail trade, information and communication, and finance and insurance. In the first phase of entrepreneurial decision-making, knowledge of a sector's capacity is useful as it helps an entrepreneur moves on to the next phase.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, experiential learning, decision making, simulation game

1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial conceptualisation may vary across context and field. The introduction of entrepreneurship simulation game entitled Young Entrepreneur Network (YENT) is aligned with previous research by [1], which had proven the perceived effectiveness of serious games on the players, specifically entrepreneurship simulation games in learning environments. As serious games differ from entertainment games, the participants focus on problem-solving tasks and incorporate the imperfect nature of interactions with the real world and specifically useful concept in approaching entrepreneurial opportunities [2]. In addition, the participants are also indirectly involved in experiential learning when they move through the game.

1.1. Theory of Experiential Learning

According to [3], the theory of experiential learning is built on the following six propositions:

Learning is better understood as a process and not in terms of results. The primary emphasis should be on engaging participants in a process that provides feedback on their learning effort's effectiveness.

- (i) All learning is re-learning. Learning is better encouraged through a process that extracts the views and ideas about a subject from the participants so that they can be discussed, evaluated, and incorporated into fresh and well-developed ideas;
- (ii) Learning aims for the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of world adaptation. Throughout the learning process, one is called upon to switch back and forth between opposing modes of learning, namely action / reflection, and feeling / thinking;
- (iii) Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world. Not just the product of thought, learning includes the whole person's integrated functioning-thinking, sensing, perceiving, and acting;
- (iv) Learning results from person-environment synergy transactions. Learning occurs by integrating the dialectical processes of assimilating new experiences into established concepts and adapting existing concepts to new experiences;
- (v) Learning is the process of knowledge development. Social knowledge is created and recreated within the learner's personal knowledge.

1.2. Serious Games Criteria

The simulation and gaming literature suggests that serious games are often evaluated using three criteria: fidelity, verification, and validity. These criteria are explained as follows:

- (i) Fidelity refers to the amount of realism in a simulation [4];
- (ii) Verification focuses on ensuring whether the simulation is working, and modeling the scenario and variables as intended. Prior research in entrepreneurship education has found technical reliability to be essential for effective student engagement within the classroom setting [5];
- (iii) Validity aims to ensure that the simulation is designed to correctly model the processes that exist in reality [6].

As conclusion, games place participants in interactive virtual environments that can be immersive, and the consequential serious play that allows participants to take part in entrepreneurial decision-making and build entrepreneurial preparedness in a safe and risk-free environment. The gaming landscape also continues to progress with many more products on the market covering different entrepreneurial contexts and technological advancements, such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence offering many opportunities for improvements in technological and learning sophistication. In most cases, the games simulate decision, choice, and action frameworks well, and have a good level of fidelity for the chosen audience. Participants gain access to appropriate processes and have an opportunity to have fun and play when they are the founder of a business.

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