

Chapter 2

Minority Experiences and Use of Games in Education Around the World

ABSTRACT

This chapter provides an overview of minority experience and the development of gaming technology all over the world. The use of gaming for education and entertainment is not limited to the United States, but globally gaming and education is viewed positively. This positive attitude needs to be explored to develop new educative and engaging strategies for minorities. In this chapter, the authors explore the use of gaming technology in other countries of the world. The countries are Canada, Spain, the Philippines, Norway, Korea, China, and South Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Canada has been the leader in developing new educative engagements, using video gaming as a median. Spain has been the leader in Europe while using gaming to transform secondary schools as a new more interactive way to learn. Norway, conversely, has used gaming to address the high levels of minority students in Special Education programs. China and Korea have the fastest-growing population of gamers. South Africa and the Philippines are minority countries that are banking on gaming education and have developed university programs to meet the needs of their communities.

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Gaming has not only been for entertainment but has also been used to improve and engage minority students. The exploration of meaningful experience for both classroom and gaming technology has been the challenge in developing new problem-solving strategies for minorities globally.

Minorities continue to experience disparities in different domains based on various factors such as race, ethnicity, culture, and gender. The disparity is also vastly influenced by the local cultural trends. As Janks (2014) argues, social orders that create disparities based on gender, race, religion, or ethnicity do not just happen and are not predetermined. The author posits that effective educational practices can make a positive difference in understanding and building awareness of those practices and also help us challenge and transform those social practices. Education is much more than getting ready for the job market; education provides us the tools for our social conduct, strength of character, and self-respect (Bhardwaj, 2016).

Even though there are a number of challenges for minorities, and reality doesn't necessarily motivate them, virtual-reality games can be designed to motivate them and help in their bonding with others (McGonigal, 2011). It is important to understand that video or computer-based games are not the solution to all societal or educational problems, but digital games have the potential to improve learning and promote challenges, engagement, and problem-solving strategies (Gros, 2007).

Barko & Sadler (2012) look at the conceptual differences between video-game learning and traditional classroom and laboratory learning. They explore the notion of virtual experience by comparing a commonly used high school laboratory protocol on DNA extraction with a similar experience provided by a biotechnology-themed video game. When considered conceptually, the notion of virtual experience is not limited to those experiences generated by computer-aided technology, as with a video game or computer simulation. Virtuality can apply to many real-world experiences as well. It is proposed that the medium of the learning experience, be it video game or classroom, is not an important distinction to consider. Instead, we should seek to determine what kinds of meaningful experiences apply for both classrooms and video game technology.

Griffiths (2002) acknowledged that video games have a great positive potential in addition to their entertainment value, and there has been considerable success when games are designed to address a specific problem or to teach certain skills. The skills education aspect might represent one

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