

HOW WILL VIDEO GAMES IN THE METAVERSE AFFECT ADOLESCENT CHILDREN?

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ABSTRACT

Video games are predicted to play a significant role in the development of the metaverse, which has raised concerns about the potential impact on adolescent children. Parents have concerns about the violent content of some games, which can lead to aggressive behavior. Other stakeholders, such as psychiatrists, teachers, and caretakers, have a role in understanding and addressing the impact of multiverse games on adolescents. Psychiatrists and mental health professionals are concerned about the potential negative effects of multiverse games on the mental health of adolescents. Teachers must also be aware of the potential negative effects of prolonged screen time and addiction to games. Game developers must also consider the potential negative impacts of video games in the metaverse on adolescent children, such as addiction.

Key words: metaverse, video games, adolescents

Introduction

The metaverse, a virtual reality space where people can interact with each other and digital objects in a three-dimensional environment, is predicted to be significantly influenced by video games. However, this has raised concerns about the potential impact of multiverse video games on adolescent children. While video games have been shown to have both positive and negative effects on children, the impact of multiverse games on adolescents is a topic of debate among

stakeholders, including parents and children. Parents have concerns about the violent content of some games, which can lead to aggressive behavior in children. Thus, it is essential to consider the perspectives of all stakeholders, including psychiatrists, teachers, and caretakers, who have a role in understanding and addressing the impact of multiverse games on adolescents. In the article, "Do Video Games Help or Harm the Malaysian Youth?", the INTI International University & Colleges says, "parents have been concerned about the effects of video games on the development of their children" (Do Video Games Help or Harm the Malaysian Youth, 2023). Teachers are another important stakeholder when it comes to the impact of multiverse games on adolescents. However, they must also be aware of the potential negative effects of prolonged screen time and addiction to games. From the perspective of game developers, the integration of video games into the metaverse has the potential to both positively and negatively affect adolescent children. On the positive side, video games in the metaverse can provide a unique and immersive experience for children, allowing them to engage with others in a virtual world that can help develop their social skills and creativity.

However, game developers must also consider the potential negative impacts of video games in the metaverse on adolescent children, such as addiction, which can negatively impact a child's physical and mental health, as well as their academic and social lives. This paper aims to examine how video games in the metaverse can affect adolescent children and how stakeholder analysis can be used to identify the interests, powers, and coalitions of stakeholders involved in this issue. By understanding the perspectives of all stakeholders, appropriate measures can be taken to mitigate any negative impacts of multiverse video games on adolescent children while capitalizing on their positive effects.

Theoretical Framework

What is a stakeholder analysis?

Stakeholder analysis is a tool used to identify, understand, and manage the interests, power, and coalitions of individuals or groups who have a stake in a particular issue, project, or organization. It helps to identify the key stakeholders, understand their perspectives, assess their level of influence, and develop effective strategies for engaging with them.

The stakeholder analysis process involves identifying and mapping out all the relevant stakeholders, analyzing their interests, power, and influence, and determining the best ways to engage and communicate with them.

When is it useful to use the stakeholder analysis?

Stakeholder analysis is useful in situations where decisions have far-reaching consequences and where the interests and perspectives of multiple parties need to be considered. It is especially useful in complex situations where there are multiple stakeholders with competing interests, and where there may be conflicts or disagreements among stakeholders. It can be used in a variety of settings, such as government, business, and nonprofit organizations, to inform decision-making, build consensus, and manage relationships with stakeholders. Stakeholder analysis is also beneficial in situations where it is important to ensure that all voices are heard, and where stakeholder engagement is critical to the success of the project or organization. Overall, stakeholder analysis is a valuable tool for ensuring that all perspectives are considered and that the best possible outcomes are achieved.

Research Design and Methodology

How will video games in the metaverse affect adolescent children, was the focus of this study, I aimed to investigate the impact of excessive video game use on children's physical and mental health, as well as their academic and social lives. To collect data, I searched relevant

keywords such as "video game addiction," "health effects of video games," "academic performance and video games," and "social skills and video games." Articles were selected based on their relevance to the research question and inclusion criteria. The selected articles were analyzed using a content analysis approach, which involved categorizing the data according to themes related to the research question. The results indicated that excessive video game use can lead to negative physical and mental health outcomes, lower academic performance, and reduced social skills in children. These findings highlight the importance of monitoring and regulating children's video game use to promote healthy development.

Analysis

The stakeholders involved in this research question are diverse and encompass a wide range of individuals and groups. Adolescent children are the primary stakeholders, as they will be directly affected by video games in the metaverse. Parents also have a stake in this research question, as they are responsible for their children's well-being. Video game developers will be interested in the research question, as they will want to understand the impact of their games on adolescent children. Educators will have a stake in the research question, as they will want to understand the impact of video games in the metaverse on children's learning and development. Psychologists will be interested in the research question, as they will want to understand the potential impact of video games in the metaverse on children's mental and emotional health.

Regulators will also have a stake in the research question, as they will want to understand the impact of video games in the metaverse on children and ensure their safety. The gaming industry as a whole will have a stake in the research question, as they will want to understand the impact of video games in the metaverse on the industry's future growth and profitability. Researchers will also have a stake in the research question, as they will want to contribute to

the knowledge base in this field. Advertisers will be interested in the research question, as they will want to understand the impact of video games in the metaverse on children's purchasing behavior. Finally, ethics committees will be interested in the research question, as they will want to consider the ethical implications of video games in the metaverse on children. The involvement of these diverse stakeholders underscores the importance of this research question and highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that considers multiple perspectives.

Video games have become increasingly popular among adolescents in recent years. One type of game that has gained popularity is those set in a multiverse, which allows players to explore and interact with multiple parallel universes. While video games have been shown to have both positive and negative effects on children, the impact of multiverse games on adolescents is a topic of debate among stakeholders, including parents and children. In their article, the IEA Staff states, "Studies show that video games facilitate cognitive changes in the brain. Adults who have had experience with video games before adolescence perform better at memory tasks than those who have not had video game experience as a child" (IEA Staff, 2022). This suggests that video games can have positive effects on cognitive function, especially memory. Studies indicate that individuals who start playing video games before adolescence perform better at memory tasks than those who do not have prior video game experience. This highlights the potential benefits of early exposure to video games on cognitive function.

One of the main benefits of multiverse games is that they provide an immersive experience for players. The ability to explore different worlds and interact with unique characters can stimulate the imagination and enhance creativity. These games can also promote problem-solving and critical thinking skills, as players must navigate through complex worlds and overcome obstacles. However, the negative effects of multiverse games cannot be overlooked. The

most significant concern is the potential for addiction. Adolescents may become so immersed in the game that they neglect their responsibilities and relationships in real life. Moreover, prolonged screen time can lead to physical health problems, such as eye strain and obesity.

From the perspective of parents, multiverse games can be a cause for concern. They worry that their children may become addicted or be exposed to inappropriate content. Parents also have concerns about the violent content of some games, which can lead to aggressive behavior in children.

On the other hand, adolescents view multiverse games as a source of entertainment and socialization. Many of these games allow players to interact with others from around the world, promoting a sense of community and connectedness. This is especially important for adolescents who may struggle with social anxiety or find it challenging to make friends in real life.

Additionally, adolescents appreciate the sense of control and autonomy that multiverse games offer. They can create their own characters, customize their appearance, and make choices that affect the game's outcome. This sense of agency can be empowering for adolescents, who are often still navigating their identities and roles in society.

It is also important to consider the role of game developers in creating multiverse games. They have a responsibility to ensure that their games are appropriate for children and do not promote harmful behavior or beliefs. Game developers must be transparent about the content of their games and provide appropriate warning labels for violence, explicit language, and other mature themes.

Multiverse games can have both positive and negative effects on adolescent children, and it is essential to consider the perspectives of all stakeholders. Parents must monitor their children's screen time and content consumption, while game developers must ensure that their games are appropriate for children. At the same time, adolescents

should be allowed to enjoy these games responsibly, as they provide a source of entertainment, socialization, and empowerment.

In addition to parents and children, other stakeholders, including psychiatrists, teachers, and caretakers, have a role in understanding and addressing the impact of multiverse games on adolescents. Psychiatrists and mental health professionals are concerned about the potential negative effects of multiverse games on the mental health of adolescents. While these games can be a source of enjoyment, they can also exacerbate mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. For example, if an adolescent becomes addicted to a game, they may experience feelings of hopelessness and despair when they cannot play.

Moreover, some games may promote unhealthy body images or unrealistic standards of beauty, which can lead to body dissatisfaction and eating disorders. Psychologists and psychiatrists also worry that the hyper-realistic violence and gore in some games can desensitize children to real-world violence, making them more likely to engage in aggressive behavior.

Teachers are another important stakeholder when it comes to the impact of multiverse games on adolescents. Some teachers believe that these games can be beneficial for learning and that they promote critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. However, teachers must also be aware of the potential negative effects of prolonged screen time and addiction to games.

Moreover, teachers should be alert to any changes in behavior or academic performance that may be related to gaming. They can work with parents and school counselors to identify any issues and develop strategies for addressing them. Teachers can also use games as an educational tool, incorporating them into lesson plans to engage students and make learning more fun.

Caretakers, such as babysitters and nannies, also have a role in monitoring children's gaming habits. They must be aware of the risks associated with excessive gaming and understand how to identify signs

of addiction or other negative effects. Caretakers should work with parents to set boundaries and limits on gaming, such as setting a time limit for gaming each day.

From the perspective of game developers, the integration of video games into the metaverse has the potential to both positively and negatively affect adolescent children. On the positive side, video games in the metaverse can provide a unique and immersive experience for children, allowing them to engage with others in a virtual world that can help develop their social skills and creativity. Additionally, it can provide a sense of community and belonging, which can be especially important for children who may feel isolated or marginalized in the physical world.

However, game developers must also consider the potential negative impacts of video games in the metaverse on adolescent children. One concern is that excessive use of these games can lead to addiction, which can negatively impact a child's physical and mental health, as well as their academic and social lives. "Continued excessive use of screens can result in long-term or permanent changes in the brain that require extensive behavioral and medical treatment to reverse" (Luker, 2022).

The following table is from Laura Masi's article, "Video Games in ADHD and Non-ADHD Children: Modalities of Use and Association With ADHD Symptoms", it illustrates the increasing number of children that have been diagnosed with ADHD after being exposed to increased screen/game time over years in their development stage.

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Additionally, children may be exposed to inappropriate content or behaviors within the virtual world, which can lead to desensitization and normalization of harmful actions. This is especially important to consider given that children may not have the same level of discernment as adults in recognizing what is inappropriate or harmful.

Another concern for game developers is the potential for cyberbullying and harassment within the virtual world. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to these types of behaviors, and game developers must take measures to prevent and address these issues within their games. This can include implementing moderation tools and policies, as well as educating players on appropriate behavior and reporting mechanisms.

Ultimately, game developers have a responsibility to ensure that video games in the metaverse are safe and appropriate for adolescent children. This requires a commitment to designing games that are engaging and immersive, while also being mindful of potential negative impacts and taking steps to prevent them. By doing so, game developers can create a positive and enjoyable experience for children that enhances their development and well-being.

Conclusion

It is predicted that video games will play a significant role in the development of the metaverse, and this has raised concerns about the potential impact on adolescent children. Parents have concerns about the violent content of some games, which can lead to aggressive behavior. Other stakeholders, such as psychiatrists, teachers, and caretakers, have a role in understanding and addressing the impact of multiverse games on adolescents. From the perspective of game developers, the integration of video games into the metaverse has the potential to both positively and negatively affect adolescent children. On the positive side, video games can provide a unique and immersive experience for children, allowing them to engage with others in a virtual world. However, game developers must also consider the potential

negative impacts of video games in the metaverse on adolescent children, such as addiction and physical and mental health. ■

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