

South Africa

INDIGENISING COMMUNITY WORK TRAINING:

AN EXPERIMENT IN THE USE OF SERIOUS GAMING

Presented by

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1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

One of the biggest challenges faced in the decolonialisation/
Africanisation / indigenisation of social work training:

the lack of appropriate/applicable/relevant academic literature

The core question is, therefore:

**How can all available sources – even from outside of a country's borders
– be used to provide locally appropriate training in social work?**

One possible solution is to find a way:

**to 'transform' all available literature to better 'fit' local training needs
and practices**

One way in which this 'transformation process' could be undertaken, is:

**through the use of serious games or the gamification of some core
components of social work learning**

2. BACKGROUND

A “serious” or “applied” game is one designed for a primary purpose **other than** for pure entertainment.

By using the design methodologies, narrative structure, visual arts, and interaction techniques commonly available in commercial games, these games additionally injects the pedagogical positive elements of **fun** and **competition** into the simulations.

Some advantages of serious games:

- ❑ They produce more positive & balanced results than the role-plays & paper-based simulations that are typically used in practice training
- ❑ They ensure that all the students have the same access to “real world” and relevant training scenarios
- ❑ They incorporate the pedagogical positive elements of fun and competition into the simulations
- ❑ They can provide educators with a tool to ‘transform’ available Western training material into ‘Africanised’ practice exercises.

3. PURPOSE & BASIC NATURE OF WORKSHOP

3.1 Proof of concept (POC) and development & testing (D&T) process

The workshop forms part of a three-step POC and D&T process

- ❑ **Step 1: Tested with a small group of mainly practitioners** (19/6/2017, 20 respondents)
- ❑ **Step 2: Peer group testing** (current workshop – 11/10/2017)
- ❑ **Step 3: Student testing** (NWU & one volunteer residential university that prescribes the book) (Volunteers sought for June 2018)

3.2 Nature of the workshop

- **Introduce the “Theory and Practice of Community Work” (TPCW) game**
- **Attendees will get the opportunity to ‘play’ the game**
- **Attendees provide feedback via a questionnaire & discussions**

4. THEORETICAL BASE (1)

In gamified learning, game attributes can be used to effect learning-related knowledge, attitudes and or behaviours in two ways:

- ❑ **In the mastering of scientific knowledge** (usually in the form of "edugames") **and/or**
- ❑ **In the mastery of scientific skills** (usually in the form of "simulations games")

The latter is specifically designed as a type of behavioural/skills mediator/moderator.

Table 1 (see next) contains core characteristics of the TPCW game in terms of the **GPS** (*Gameplay/Purpose/Scope*) framework for the categorisation of serious games

4. THEORETICAL BASE (2)

Table 1: Classification of the TPCW game in terms of Gameplay, Purpose/Scope (GPS) criteria

Electronic (<i>computer based</i>) Serious Games		
GPS/Primary variables	Categories	Characteristics of the TPCW game
Gameplay (<i>how it is structured and played</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules (game-based vs. play-based) Input methods/ platform (WWW, computer, web, tablet, cell phone) Drama-related setup (goal based vs. no goals based) Time-related setup (time limited vs. no time limit) 	<p>TPCW's Rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game-based. The player's goal is to complete the game with as few "mistakes" as possible in order to get the most "points" <p>TPCW's input methods/ platform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web and computer based (cell phone and tablet app at a later stage) <p>TPCW's drama-related setup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal based: Scenario and role-play <p>TPCW's time-related setup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No time limit
Purpose (<i>entertainment plus other outcomes</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edugames (transmit educational knowledge) Simulation & training games (mastering of skills) News games (informative) Political games Advergimes (broadcast advertising - persuasive) Business games 	<p>TPCW is primarily a simulation & training game:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides player with the opportunity to practice his/her professional critical thinking and decision making skills in a "safe" environment <p>TPCW does contain edugame elements via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-game feedback & "Help" and "About" files (contains tips & references to applicable theory)
Scope (<i>nature of the targeted market</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Healthcare Humanitarian Professional State, government, politics Military & defence Corporate, etc. 	<p>TPCW's scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional & Educational

5. THE WORKSHOP'S PURPOSE & THE "RULES OF THE GAME" (1)

5.1 Purpose of the session

(a) Determine proof of concept

Three core questions to be answered:

- Can a serious game such as TPCW help with the indigenising of community work education and training?
- Can the TPCW game improve the quality and relevance of community work education and training in South Africa?
- Is there a need for a serious game such as the TPCW game amongst South African social work training institutions?

(b) To learn something new about community work

(c) To have some fun



5. THE WORKSHOP'S PURPOSE & THE "RULES OF THE GAME" (2)

5.2 Special request

Request: Are the attendees at the conference willing to function as a “panel of experts” in the judging of the game?

- If so, please complete the questionnaire
- If not, please still play along

5.3 The questionnaire

Intro

- Section 1: First impression
- Section 2: To determine personal preferences
- Section 3: Comments and recommendations

Panel of Experts: Feedback Form [ASASWEI]
THE COMMUNITY WORK GAME [RPG]

Name of respondent (full name):

Email:

Type of respondent (check all that apply):
Indirect communication ☐ Social skills practice ☐ Other personal aspects ☐

Personalized feedback on play:
Game name: Game difficulty: Other personal aspects:

Comments and recommendations:
Comments and recommendations:

Section A: First Impression (This is a one-time question, it is not repeated)

1. Instructions: Please describe your first impressions of the game in three lines or paragraphs.

1.1:

1.2:

1.3:

Submit

Thato



Dorick



Ntombi



Helen



Valeska



Fatima



5. THE WORKSHOP'S PURPOSE & THE "RULES OF THE GAME" (3)

5.4 The "rules of the game"

- Each attendee will be provided with six color-coded "voting" papers that represent the six social workers in the game**
- At the end of each stage when it becomes time to choose one of the options, I will ask everyone to raise the voting paper of the team member whose idea they support**
- The assistants will help to count the responses**
- The results of the "top 3" will be entered into the game and we will see how well you did**
- We will keep on playing the game until time runs out (*it takes 2-3 hours to complete the entire game*)**
- Everyone will get the opportunity to complete the questionnaire before the post-game discussion (*see next*)**

5. THE WORKSHOP'S PURPOSE & THE "RULES OF THE GAME" (4)

5.5 Post-game discussion

The last 15 minutes of the workshop will be spent on open discussions of the TPCW game and the use of serious gaming in social work training in general.

Next – Let's play the TPCW game

