"The Incident Replay" – A Proposed Ethics Learning Activity for Business Students

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Introduction

* Ethics education is featured as one of the important elements of General Education.

* Wouters, van Nimwegen, van Oostendorp, and van der Spek (2013) mentioned that serious games are more effective than conventional instruction methods in terms of learning and retention.

Literature review

* Schrier (2015) provides a framework for matching the games activities with the intended education goals including enhancing ethical awareness, emotional intelligence, practice of empathy-related skills, reasoning, ethical reflection, character education, and cultivating facility with major ethics issues and approaches.

* This paper aims to propose an ethics learning activity for business students in tertiary education.

Literature review

* Kohlberg' moral development model (1973) has been widely discussed in ethics education over the past few decades.

* According to Kohlberg (1973), There are three main levels of moral stages: preconventional, conventional, and post-conventional (autonomous or principled level).

Literature review

* Lowry research (2003) supports Weber and Green (1991) who reported that approximate half of the students were staying at the preconventional level of the ethic development model.

* This suggests that there are rooms for educators to facilitate students to move up from preconventional level to conventional level of the moral development model.

Literature review

* At the second level (conventional), orientations turn towards "interpersonal concordance" or being a nice person (stage 3) and behaviors conforming to fixed rules and authority which is the "law and order" orientation (stage 4).

* In other words, at this level, individuals have more considerations on expectations from family, group or nation.

* Stakeholder Theory (Freeman 1984)

  Includes: Employees, management, customers, local community, suppliers, owners

Pilot Interview - Objectives

* This paper aims to propose an ethics education activity for tertiary education students in business programmes with focuses on increasing students' awareness on ethics, nurturing reflections and considerations on impact on stakeholders in the ethical decision process.

The Ethics Learning Activity Framework: Key elements

1. Scenario settings:

* Real situation? or Hypothetical situation?
* School/Campus issues?
* Work issues?
* General issues?
- Relevance of the issues/settings

2. Role-taking discussion

* Different roles within the same group?
* Same role within the group, and discussions/debates across different groups?
* - Stakeholders' perspectives

The Ethics Learning Activity Framework: Key elements

3. Anonymous Indication/Poll

* Participants are invited to vote on anonymous basis for the decision maker/characters in the scenarios

* 2 rounds of poll: "Before" and "after" the discussion

4. Computer-generated outcome possibilities based on participants' anonymous indication

5. Debriefing

Methodology

* This explorative study adopts qualitative method to investigate students' perspectives for designing an ethics learning game for tertiary students. Semi-structured interview approach (Streubert & Carpenter, 1995) was adopted.

* The study consists of two stages of face-to-face individual interviews in which three tertiary students were purposefully invited to share their views from their personal perspectives on the proposed ethics game activity.

* Pilot interviews: 3 Interviewees: 2 males (from disciplines of accounting and management); 1 female (finance discipline)

Findings

* There are evidences that support the use of the proposed key elements in the game such as scenarios settings, role-taking discussion, computer-generated outcome possibilities based on participants' anonymous indication.

* Second, the proposed game is also effective in enhancing students' considerations on stakeholders' perspectives.

* Third, this pilot study also suggests that the proposed game activity can increase students' interests in learning ethics.

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