

Digital Self-Identity and the Role of Interactivity in Psychiatric Assessment and Treatment

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Abstract : This work draws upon research in the fields of games development and mental health treatments to assess the influence that interactive entertainment has on the populous, and the potential of technology to affect areas of psychiatric assessment and treatment. It will use studies to establish the evolving direction of interactive media in the development of 'digital self-identity,' and how this can be incorporated into treatment to the benefit of psychiatry. It will determine that this approach will require collaborative production between developers and psychiatrists in order to ensure precise goals are met, improving the success of serious gaming for psychiatric assessment and treatment. Analysis documents the reach of video games across a growing global community of gamers, highlighting cases of the positives and negatives of video game usage. The games industry is largely oblivious to the psychological negatives, with psychiatrists encountering new conditions such as gaming addiction, which is now recognized by the World Health Organization. With an increasing amount of gamers worldwide, and an additional time per day invested in online gaming and character development, the concept of virtual identity as a means of expressing the id needs further study to ensure successful treatment. In conclusion, the assessment and treatment of game-related conditions are currently reactionary, and while some mental health professionals have begun utilizing interactive technologies to assist with the assessment and treatment of conditions, this study will determine how the success of these products can be enhanced. This will include collaboration between software developers and psychiatrists, allowing new avenues of skill-sharing in interactive design and development. Outlining how to innovate approaches to engagement will reap greater rewards in future interactive products developed for psychiatric assessment and treatment.

Keywords : virtual reality, virtual identity, interactivity, psychiatry

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