

# BUSINESS REPORT

**FIT5122: PROFESSIONAL  
PRACTICE**

ASSIGNMENT 4

**SOVAN SINHA ROY  
30201152**

TUTOR: ANUSHA BISWAS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this business report, I scrutinized a recently conceived *multiplayer online role-playing game for smartphones* targeting the children aged between 8 to 14 on behalf of **MonGamerz**. I commenced with the dissection of the overall game along with all the key features of this game and gave my insights to the pros while just mentioning the cons to be delineated subsequently. So, as far as the great benefits are concerned with some of the features, I elucidated that attractive graphics can captivate the children and stimulate their fascination and how location sharing if done properly can enhance the closeness and attachment between them. Moreover, group or peer-to-peer communication is a catalyst for augmented soft skills as well as hard skills required in order to excel in games of this kind and accomplish success in them. However, I identified some grave ethical & privacy problems or issues with some of the features like reckless spending & disclosure of sensitive financial information by the kids courtesy of in-game purchases, addiction, and lust for more due to not only the mesmerizing graphics but also potential advancement based on spending more time on the game. Moreover, children can be easily exploited in the online environment and exposed to foul language, extreme violence, bullying, and abuse by other children & adults with bad intentions or uncouth disposition. Thereafter, I rendered some viable & apt practical solutions to the identified problems for the best outcomes (*consequentialism*) like filters & flags to block, report, and remove objectionable contents. Scrapping of a few features like daily scheduled events and advancement based on more game time and replacing them with other fantastic features like weekly & monthly quests (in place of daily scheduled events) & goodies based on progress and playing streak (consecutive days-oriented and not daily duration-oriented), etc.

Comprehensive analysis of the aforesaid and other identified problems along with their respective solutions are undertaken in the main sections of this report dealing with issues i.e., section **(4)** & recommendations i.e., section **(5)**. The concise version of it is furnished in the *Appendix* wherein a *tabular representation* of all the problems and their respective solutions are manifested. So, the bottom line is that this game promises to be a '**huge hit**' among the children provided we resolve a few issues and amend or tweak a few features taking other stakeholders like their *parents, researchers*, etc into the grand scheme of things and soliciting co-operation, feedback, some valuable assistance from them. If we manage to do that immaculately then we will ultimately succeed with this venture whilst enhancing our revenues & reputation, and by doing so gain a strong foothold in this gaming sector (teeming with millions of gamers) by entertaining people of all ages!

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

We at **MonGamerz** are looking to venture into a new *demographic market segmentation* consisting of children aged between **8 to 14** with our ambitious intent for a *new multiplayer game* primarily for *mobile devices*. We at **MonGamerz** take immense pride in being a *socially responsible* company and hence we want to thoroughly review the features of the proposed new game before pacing forth with it. The onus is on me to undertake that assessment leveraging my *knowledge & expertise* in this domain and thus in this report, I shall strive to achieve that. So, initially, I will outline my *insights* into the core *features* of our proposed new game for children. Thereafter, some pertinent points will be raised post the initial discussion regarding the *potential privacy & ethical issues or problems* pertaining to the game. Subsequently, in this report, I will try to recommend a few *formidable strategies or tangible actions* as viable & apt solutions that the company can implement in order to mitigate those issues and make this game as ethical and safe for children as possible. Finally, a concise and insightful inference will be rendered regarding this matter for the sake of not only our business but also the lives of several innocuous children all around the globe that might be at stake.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is apparently to *intimate & escalate* any potential ethical or privacy issues that can be identified by me with the new game that we have in the pipeline to the *senior executives* of our company for their *perusal*. Moreover, I will also try to articulate some *recommendations* in the form of some *practical & tangible* actions in the latter half of this report that we can undertake in order to mitigate those issues and also address any potential concerns that may arise in the future. Therefore, the overarching objective is ultimately providing a brand-new *riveting, interactive, safe, and secured* game for the children and by doing so maintaining the *high reputation* of the company.

### 3. INSIGHTS ON THE GAME & IT'S FEATURES

It promises to be a highly *interactive & engaging* multiplayer online role-playing game assorted with several features targeting a completely new generation which was hitherto left untouched by us. However, we have to *tread carefully* as we are *specialists* and *eminent* in the genre of **war** or **crime** and it can be a potential *deal-breaker* for this *gullible* age-group if we actually include elements that we are inherently known for in *abundance* or even in *considerable amount* i.e., **violence, nudity, foul language**, etc. We were definitely mindful of this fact while concocting the *blueprint* of this game I reckon so I won't delve deeper into that. Now, I will briefly go through the features first with my *empirical insights* along the way before I elaborate on the problems identified and their potential remedies in the next couple of sections.

- 1) **State of the Art Attractive Graphics** for kids is a very **conductive** feature to have in order to *captivate children* and *stimulate their fascination* making them feel always *cheerful* and *excited* while playing it. The only slight drawback in my point of view is that it can be very *addictive*. We will get back to this later.
- 2) **Daily Quests** for *bonus points* are fine to *encourage continuous participation* but **Daily Scheduled Events** for the same is something which can prove out to be problematic in many ways both *ethically* as well as *socially*.
- 3) **Easy to Transact In-Game Purchases** is something that is deeply concerning when it comes to this age group comprising *innocent & immature* kids who should have no access to *monetary transactions* on their volition without the *consent* or *supervision* of their parents.
- 4) **Group & Peer to Peer Communication** is healthy if *regulated* and *conducted* in a *controlled environment* as it fosters several *soft skills* like **communicational, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, conflict resolution**, etc among these children whilst assisting them in *making new friends* and *expanding their social circle*. However, a few challenges do exist pertaining to this matter in discourse.
- 5) **Location Awareness** for *keeping tabs* with the location of other (in-game) friends & acquaintances is like a *double-edged sword*, on one hand, it keeps you very close to your *near & dear ones*. but at the same time, it makes others who are being *tracked against their wish* or *will* susceptible to various *misadventures* or *mishaps*.
- 6) **Faster Advancement for Devoting More Hours of Game Time to Reward Active Members** is something that definitely needs to be scrapped. The reasons will be elicited in the upcoming segment.

### 4. MAIN ETHICAL & PRIVACY PROBLEMS/ISSUES IDENTIFIED

- 1) State of the art graphics like I mentioned earlier can be *very attractive & appealing* to kids but on the flipside, it can be very *addictive* or *seductive* as well. This addiction can potentially lead to *prolonged engagement & abject escapism* due to excessive indulgence in the game. In their formative years, it is not ideal to keep them perpetually hooked in video games that too running online given the massive *frailties* of such an environment.

- 2) The feature of Daily Scheduled Events is very unethical & immoral to render to kids who should rather focus more on **studies** and **co-curricular activities** and hence keep their daily schedules flexible for it. Other *healthy physical activities* and *daily chores* must also be prioritized higher by these children thus their parents often need to take care of that and hence amidst all this we must not *impede* or create *menace* in any form or manner by implicitly **compelling** but explicitly **instigating** kids to *devote* certain *designated hours or minutes* every day asking them to **pause, defer, or abandon** everything else in that process. By doing so, we are actually *adversely affecting* not only their **intellectual growth & cognitive learning** but also their *hampering* their **mental & physical well-being**.
- 3) Provision of Financial Transactions for in-game purchases for *quick advancements, powerups*, etc should ideally never be there in the first place because it is unethical to lure such *callow* kids into *craving for* & then often *making* online purchases on their own. They should not be prompted to decide & buy anything by themselves from anywhere let alone this game (till they are mature enough to take important *decisions & responsibilities*) because they are too **naïve** to *spend money wisely and value it*. If they are given the opportunity, then they will most certainly *squander* their parent's hard-earned money *recklessly* and that can cause a lot of family *disputes* and *disturbances* in the aftermath of it. Moreover, since they generally don't own any *bank account or credit/debit card* nor *earn money themselves*, they are most likely to give their parent's bank account or credit card details whilst making those **online payments** but incidentally sometimes they do give their own credentials as well if they possess one (children's account, etc). If the payments made or to be made are invariably with the *consent* or under the *purview* of their parents, then it is totally fine as the adults are *aware* of it and inherently *approve* it. Furthermore, they can easily **cancel, stop, and disapprove** these transactions if they sense anything *suspicious, malicious, frivolous, or undesirable* but if these young children *surreptitiously* make those payments first and then their parents get notified about the same then it can be enormously catastrophic as not only the money (mostly their parent's) is being spent without the parent's *cognizance* but also their and/or their children's *personal details* are being shared too and this *sensitive data disclosure* can be absolutely devastating if it falls into the hands of some **fraudsters** or **inimical cybercriminals** (hackers, etc) instead of us who invariably pretend to be us or someone like us.
- 4) The main privacy concern with group and peer to peer communication is *more disclosure of information than what was inherently needed or required*. Moreover, due to the nature of these *communication channels*, the interactions can at times be *intimate, intense, or deceptive* leading to the exchange of **hyper-sensitive information, offensive content, or unnecessary details** amongst the participants. This can very easily be used against those whose information was invariably compromised as this information can be leaked later on grounds of *personal vendetta, greed* (selling data to *third parties*), or other *mischievous ulterior motives*, etc. On top of that, the *mental harassment* at being **bullied, abused**, etc can be immensely *devastating* that can perhaps *linger* for a very long time in the *minds* of these tender aged young souls.

- 5) Location-based awareness can rather turn into the *tracking of kids* in next to no time which can consequently have a *detrimental effect* on the relationships between these kids as many of them and even their parents will not want live locations to be *publicly available* to several other kids all the time. These kids might *not be comfortable* with *sharing* it or more often than not their parents may have *strong reservations* against their kid's movement being monitored by not only their other friends but several other gamers as well. Furthermore, if anyone wants to cause any *harm* to any of these kids with gruesome crimes like *rape*, *murder*, and *extortion*, etc then they can quite easily do so by tracking their location or movements and planning accordingly. Additionally, '**Profiling**' can also be done and we already know how seamlessly someone can be *harmed*, *framed*, or *targeted* by certain *rogue forces* or *authorities* who manage to gain *surveillance access* to the children's as well as their parent's location and day to day activities and subsequently create those *digital images and wreak havoc in their lives by targeting them*.
- 6) By encouraging faster advancement for active members by delving into more game time, we will actually be setting a *dangerous precedence* wherein we will be *advocating for a sedentary lifestyle* and in that process facilitate *utter annihilation* of the ***school-life balance*** of these children and their guardian (that get them ready every day) who need to follow a *daily routine strictly & faithfully*. So, we simply cannot permit this feature to prevail as it will lure kids to *neglect* everything else and solely *accentuate* on the game to *progress expeditiously*. On top of that, I am afraid that if they go on playing for hours non-stop daily, then their parents will eventually *confront* them one day and this might result in ***retaliation & revolt*** (generally in *low-context cultures*) or ***depression & dejection*** (generally in *high-context cultures*) and in both the cases can perhaps also lead to ***potential suicides*** or ***physical harming tendency*** (mostly self but also at times to others) from these kids who are *thwarted* from playing as much as they would have *desired*.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS WITH POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

- 1) For the first identified issue pertaining to the state of the art graphics, I think we should provide an **in-game wellness reminder** function that regularly reminds (starting from every 30 mins gradually to every 10 mins after 4 hours) or notifies people about their game time once it exceeds 2 hours and encourages them to take a break or come back the next day or next time once they play continuously or cumulatively for more than 6 hours a day. Moreover, some **constructive advice or suggestions** (pre-programmed) can also be provided from time to time showcasing the *ill-effects of excessive game time* on the *body* (eyes, backbone, fingers, etc) so that children realize that it is not a good thing to spent several hours daily on it rather spending a couple of hours every day is perhaps the right thing to do. Moreover, we must avoid *bright flashy lights* or *flickering screens* to the maximum extent possible in order to prevent **Photosensitive Seizures** in these kids.
- 2) As far as the second issue is concerned, it can be **scrapped**. I would like to reiterate that we could and probably should *retain* the daily quests for bonus points as it



encourages *regular active participation* from the kids but the scheduled events are not advisable and the obvious reasons have already been lucidly elucidated in the previous section. So, I would highly recommend this sub-feature to be *eradicated* immediately. We can have **weekly or monthly quests** as a *viable & apt* alternative but that has to be *unscheduled or unconstrained with flexible timings* (deadlines perfectly alright but no exact weekly/monthly time slots as it will be a similar case to that of daily scheduled events).

- 3) There are two recommendations to the issue revolving around the in-game purchases:
  - 3.1) Option for in-game purchases is not ideal according to me but we can retain it if we are seeking for *additional revenues* from it. I am **skeptical** of the potential issues that can arise on various occasions the details of which have already been furnished. I would highly recommend that we have *certain strict measures* in place if we indeed wish to proceed with the in-game purchases. Firstly, we need to keep the number of *purchasable items* to a bare minimum with only very significant ones at their disposal so that we don't *confuse or overwhelm* the children and *trick* them into many *useless* or heaps of *trivial* in-game addons. Moreover, we also need to establish a means in place that calls for an **authentication or verification of identity** before a transaction is actually completed. We can provide a **One Time Password (OTP)** feature (generally the bank account & card details are registered under their parent's contact number) to complete a monetary transaction or an even better solution will be making children '*upload a photo with the ID proof of the person who is going to purchase it with phone numbers clearly visible for re-confirmation before the transaction (for validation & seeking confirmation from the account holders who will mostly be parents who will become aware of the proceedings if not already)*'. If any *discrepancy or breach* is detected by them during the re-confirmation process, then the transaction can be immediately *denied or cancelled* by them.
  - 3.2) Instead of promoting **real-world currency-oriented** in-game purchases, we can rather promote **in-game bonus points** for certain achievements or **fantasy money** to spend *lavishly* like how other *famous companies* like *Grand Theft Auto (V)*, *Electronic Arts (FIFA)*, etc do with most of their *premium products*. In that way, we will satiate the cravings of children to buy *expensive & attractive* things for advancement in the game that they want with *massive budgets* (in the virtual world, not the real world) and at the same time, we won't breach any **tenets** of *ethical design principles* that seek for **designer's responsibility** and **accountability** for any and every feature pertaining to the *game development* and *damages* causes thereafter when it is used by the *online gaming community*.
- 4) Imposing certain **restrictions** and **filters** based on *vulgar or universally unacceptable keywords* or **graphical contents** in our in-game communication platform will be sufficient to **moderate** the interactions and prevent any sort of *online bullying or misbehaviour* by certain kids or others around them having access to their gaming profile. The idea behind this peer-to-peer communication as I said earlier is fantastic if done properly but since there is a great possibility that it might be misused, we need to have a few *preventive & responsive measures* in place to *curb the menace* and *tackle those situations*. We can thus block texts containing a list of keywords along with *filthy*,



*lewd, and provoking* images that we know are generally *abusive, sensitive, and inappropriate* in order to prevent the dissemination of abusive content on our platform. Moreover, we can also introduce a **flagging component** to let children flag any *textual or graphical content* they believe is *inappropriate, objectionable, and offensive*, etc and then we can look into them and take necessary actions like *deleting* them, etc.

- 5) Location awareness to **stay abreast** on where their near & dear ones (who play the game) are currently *living & moving* all across the globe is perfectly fine provided it is done on *mutual agreement* or in other words both *consciously agree* to keep their *real-time locations* visible to each other till a point of time deemed suitable by both parties. However, if it is not consensual then it can perhaps **intrude** on the privacy of those who are **vulnerable** to being *monitored or tracked* by others at *times & places* without their consent. We cannot encroach on the privacy of people at all and hence there must be an option available for children to **turn-off their location information** whenever they want without any hassles. Moreover, they should also have the *liberty* to decide themselves with *whom* they want to share or exchange their location information to ensure that the feature is utterly *beneficial & trustworthy* for them. We can also create another **flag** for them to raise alarm if they feel they are in any danger or are victimized by *callous forces* but that can be secondary, our first priority in this regard should be to give *complete authority* to the children and their parents to keep their location information on/off as per their desire to others and block certain elements who they believe are misusing or are very likely to misuse any location information that is rendered by them willingly for noble causes of *staying connected* and *actively communicate* with each other.
- 6) Children should not be **lured into expending** an awful number of hours every day via those *enticing perks* of faster advancement based on hours (played). This way of rewarding active members is undesirable in many ways than one can think of as it not only *deprives* them from *dedicating more time* to other more essentials things in their lives which was aforementioned like *studies, physical activities, and sleep*, etc but also makes them prone to have an **addiction** to it and this can have an adverse *cascading effect* in their lives like the (perpetual feeling of) *game-oriented anxiety, poor marks, inadequate sleep, strained relationships* with their parents, teachers, and other people (except children like them). Therefore, we need to **scrap** this feature and hence I would strongly recommend **expunging** this feature and devising other ways to reward active members who log in daily. One great way is through **small goodies** for kids when they play for a good number of *consecutive days* (irrespective of the duration each day) say for **100** days and then we can continue giving them bigger goodies with the increasing streak to **250, 500, 1000** days and so on. In this way, we will invariably be encouraging kids to *come & visit* us every day without actually *nudging* them towards more and more daily gaming hours.
- 7) **Parent's discretion** is solicited in order to protect their **naïve** children from being exposed to the **harsh realities** of online gaming and becoming *immensely possessed* by their **gaming avatars**. I propose that we must try to reach out to all the parents so as to make them *aware* of the fact that their children are *actively participating* in our

multiplayer online game and are thus always prone to all the major threats we mentioned in the previous section. While some can & probably will be *resolved* by us, a few are not fully in our control and thus requires *comprehensive mitigation* from their end (*location control, financial transaction supervision, etc*). For the best *outcome (Consequentialism)*, we must ask them to ensure that their kids are always *safe* and *secured* from the various *harmful elements* that abound in the *online world*. Furthermore, we may *consult* a few *researchers* also to ascertain whether there is anything that can be done in order to offer *optimal gaming experiences* without *infringing any privacy or ethical matters* as we alone might not be able to ensure that *emphatically!*

## 6. CONCLUSION

To sum it all up, initially, we saw that the game promises to strike a chord with a new demographic segment in the form of children aged 8-14 with a *few salient features* that were remarkable, for instance, the state of the art graphics which is both appealing and attractive for kids to keep them elated as well as satiated while playing & progressing in the game. Location awareness via real-time sharing for them to always stay in touch with each other and interact seamlessly transcending geographic boundaries. Moreover, daily quests facilitating a great way of keeping the kids ethically bonded to the game and undertake continuous active participation, etc. However, we also saw that there are some features which were *ethically & morally* incorrect and thus needed to be either *straightaway scrapped* or *modified* and/or *replaced*. In-game monetary transactions is one such feature that may lead to kids wasting money recklessly and disclosing sensitive data without much thought, care, or consideration. Daily scheduled events is another offering that may culminate into them keeping everything important aside (studies, physical activity, sleep, family outings, etc) in order to just play our game on certain hours or time slots resulting in improper physical & mental growth in their formative years. Finally, advancement based on more game time was a recipe for disaster which could potentially lead to disbalance in the school-life routine of the children and us being held directly culpable for it. Ultimately, I recommended a few immaculate remedies to the pertinent issues identified above. For instance, we can provide in-game bonus points or virtual money for kids to spend as per their heart's content without parents having to worry about any wastage of real-world money. We can and probably should let the kids and/or their parents control the location sharing feature and decide by themselves on when exactly they want to share it and with whom. There are many more suggestions deliberated in this report which if implemented will result in *better tackling* of those *identified ethical & privacy issues* and others emerging in the near or distant future too. However, inclining towards the ethical theory of *consequentialism*, I reckon we must solicit full *co-operation* from their parents to offer better gaming experiences whilst *efficiently & effectively* combating the threats posed by the online mobile gaming environment, as otherwise, it will be very difficult for us to *succeed & attain optimal outcome* in this endeavour. All in all, if those issues are addressed emphatically then we will ultimately succeed with this venture whilst enhancing our *revenues & reputation*, and by virtue of that, *consolidate* our position as a *global gaming juggernaut* for people of all ages!

## APPENDIX

SERIAL NO	PROBLEM IDENTIFIED	KEY SOLUTION IDEAS PROPOSED
1)	Attractive graphics can be very <b>addictive</b> and <b>seductive</b> resulting in excessive non-stop gaming.	<b>In-game wellness reminders</b> after regular intervals along with pre-programmed advice & suggestions (pop-ups) highlighting harms of prolonged gaming hours.
2)	Daily scheduled events can compel children to <b>pause, defer, abandon</b> , or perhaps <b>neglect</b> everything else including studies & outdoor activities, etc and just play the game in certain time slots resulting in their <b>improper physical &amp; mental growth</b> .	This component needs to be <b>scrapped</b> . An alternative can be <b>weekly or monthly quests</b> on top of the daily quests. These should be <b>unscheduled</b> but <b>more rewarding</b> than the daily quests.
3)	The provision of in-game real money purchases can facilitate <b>reckless spending</b> from the naïve children. Sensitive information is also likely to be <b>disclosed very easily</b> online to impostors or other inimical elements (hackers, etc) by them without much thought or consideration.	Make parent's <b>consent &amp; confirmation</b> mandatory. The availability of features to keep parents <b>updated &amp; in control</b> throughout the financial transaction process is quintessential. Other substitutes to real money like <b>virtual money, point-based add-ons</b> functionality can be incorporated if feasible.
4)	Group & Peer-to-Peer communication can ensue in the disclosure of sensitive or excessive information that can be <b>exploited</b> by others. Children can potentially be <b>exposed to online abuse, bullying, and cheating</b> by other players and their associates.	Certain <b>restrictions &amp; filters</b> (keyword & image-based) can serve as <b>deterrent</b> and means for <b>regulated communications</b> . A <b>flagging</b> feature can also be introduced to let kids & their families report any <b>objectionable</b> content in their viewpoint to us for our perusal and prompt actions.
5)	Location-based information can be used for <b>tracking &amp; invading the privacy</b> of these kids and their families. ' <b>Profiling</b> ' may also be done by rogue forces who can <b>intercept</b> and <b>monitor</b> the real-time location of these people.	Keep the children and their parents <b>in control</b> to share their real-time location when they want and to whom they one through options to turn <b>location sharing on/off</b> and <b>block, hide, and allow</b> it for different people based on their preferences and occasions. Another <b>flag</b> can be created for <b>raising alarm</b> against perceivable <b>safety or security threats</b> due to location data misuse.
6)	Faster advancement for devoting more hours is completely unethical as it <b>lures &amp; instigates</b> children into focusing more on their game than other more important things in their lives like <b>studies, sleep, and physical activities</b> , etc.	This feature is to be <b>dropped</b> with immediate effect and <b>expunged</b> to uphold high standards of <b>corporate social responsibility</b> . We can award small <b>goodies</b> initially which could gradually get bigger based on their <b>progress</b> and <b>playing streak</b> (consecutive gaming days) and we can also offer other cool rewards to the active members appreciating their <b>daily participation, dedication, and performance</b> (irrespective of duration spent).