

Serious Games for Health Summary

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This paper surveyed serious games and classified them into four main aspects and then found trends among relevant characteristics of those classifications. The four main aspects come from three subjects: serious game, health, and player. The classifications for serious games were game purpose and game functionality. Health's was state of disease, and player was encompassed by a combination of skills/experience (professionals and nonprofessionals) and wellness (patient and non-patient). Essentially showcasing that serious games vary from purely entertainment, such as trying to get the user up and moving physically in real life to purely educational, such as training simulations for engineers and healthcare. There are also serious games that are used for rehabilitation for cognitive and motor skills or used for data to diagnose someone who may have an illness.

The serious games were put into both logical and meaning classifications despite the intricacies of its multiple facets. In doing so, finding relevant characteristics among each classification becomes easier and allows the data and trends they showcased to be found. The background information on the gaming industry, explicit/implicit objectives, as well as how games can easily fit into bettering one's health was articulated well and gives important context for the rest of the paper. Games themselves are limited by the hardware and controllers, but also by the targeted player base, such as those with disabilities. The paper being written in 2014 predicted that 3D would rule the market as well as online connectivity being used via mobile phones. Based off today's market, it seems to be mostly true, with many training simulations being done in VR and the prevalence of mobile apps.

The diagrams based on their classifications could be misconstrued and confuse readers, such as the text referring to the four classifications with certain labels, but the diagram having five circles and different verbiage. While they had over 100 different games for their data analysis, that is still not enough to create definitive results. For example, the trend showing that 2D games are on a rapid decline, while 3D is on the rise, makes sense technologically, as the advancements make 3D feasible on most platforms, but perhaps it is because 3D games use a larger team and have more resources to reach more users than the 2D alternatives that are less known. While the context of how games are made and the technologies used were explained in detail, perhaps it is slightly overkill for a paper that describes serious games specifically. The paper could have instead put more emphasis on how the previous classifications worked and why theirs are better.

Overall, it was an informative paper, that was able to show the different types of serious games and gather useful data. This will introduce more people who may not have been familiar with the concept and give them an understanding of how it works and where it could be trending. In return, this allows more people to come up with new ideas or improve upon what has already been done.