PROJECT SOLACE (04-74)

Cat 4 Resource Development

Written Report

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Abstract

Project Solace was a project which has made use of various interactive and user-friendly online platforms to develop a resource package, which aims to guide secondary school students from Singapore, and educate them on the various effects of stress, how to manage as well as how to prevent it, so that the number of students who are stressed on a daily basis will drop. It provides resources with detailed information about stress to educate our target audience (the secondary school students) in the project's website as well as simple tidbits relating to stress to help keep our target audience engaged and allow them to remember the facts easily and effectively through the 3 short video animations. There is also a unique choose your own adventure style book which is about the life of a secondary school student in Singapore who is facing a lot of stressful situations; and the readers can play an active role in deciding how he tackles them. In order to increase the accessibility of our products, they have all been collated in the project's website.

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Rationale

Based on personal encounters followed by research as well as surveys, we have found that a large number of Secondary school students in Singapore are unable to cope with the stress they are facing on their own. Through our research, we also found that too much stress can lead to serious side effects like depression or even suicide. Hence, this demonstrates the importance of the project in educating them about stress.

1.2   Objectives

The objectives of Project Solace were to

- Educate secondary school students from Singapore on the various side effects of stress
- Educate them on how to cope with stress
- Educate them on how to prevent stress

1.3   Target Audience

The target audience was Secondary school students aged 13 to 16 years old from Singapore. Secondary school students are often faced with multitudes of homework, and have several after school commitments (e.g. CCA, Council, etc.) as well. This gives them little to no time for rests at all. Since they are relatively young, they may not be able to deal with stress as well as adults can. (Jayson, 2014)

1.4 Resources

The resources created for this project were an educational website consisting of a blog with updates every 2 weeks, 3 educational video animations and a choose your own adventure style book.

2 REVIEW

2.1 Other projects

Many other projects also educating Project Solace's target audience about stress have products which are too lengthy like a booklet or a long video which makes the target audience disinterested after a while. Their products also severely lack a 'WOW' factor. There is a lack of uniqueness in the products, with many such projects having similar resources. Some such projects even end up linking resources from other areas and not coming up with their own creative ideas.

2.2 Literature review

An international study by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) suggests that Singapore students, especially teenagers, while known worldwide for academic excellence, also experience high levels of anxiety and have been exposed to unhealthy amounts of stress. The study polled 540,000 students from 72 countries and economies to look at the connection between well-being and achievement in the PISA tests. It emerged that their anxiety
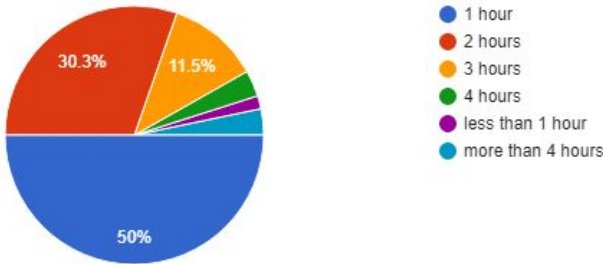
levels were significantly higher than the OECD average for all five questions. For example, 66 per cent of students across all OECD countries said they were worried about poor grades at school, but among Singapore students, it was 86 per cent. This highlighted the importance of Project Solace.
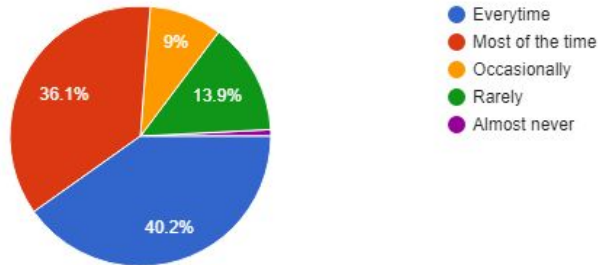
3   METHODOLOGY

3.1   Needs Analysis

To further research on the seriousness of stress among our target audience, a survey was carried out through a period of 2 months, whereby we managed to gather 122 responses from students from HCI, RI, ACS, CGS and other schools. The results of the survey show that our target audience is indeed dealing with a lot of stress, and has problems managing it.

How many hours do you get to complete your homework everyday on average?
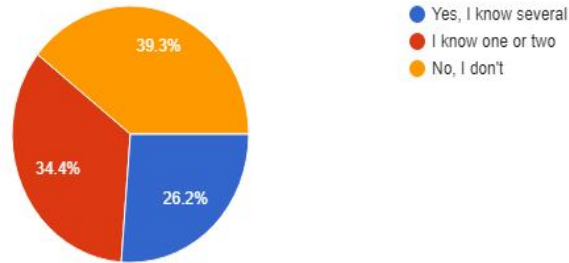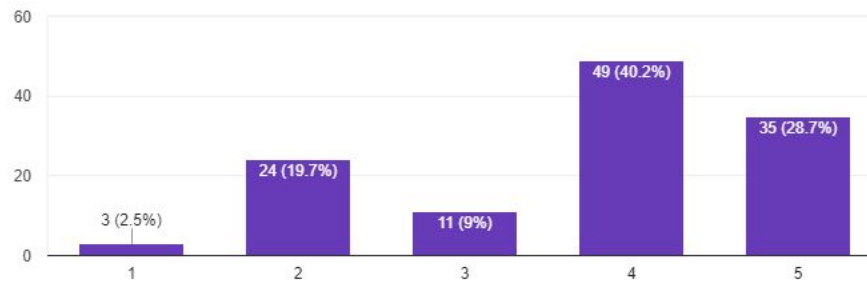
122 responses

- 1 hour
- 2 hours
- 3 hours
- 4 hours
- less than 1 hour
- more than 4 hours

Do you often procrastinate?
122 responses

- ● Everytime
- ● Most of the time
- ● Occasionally
- ● Rarely
- ● Almost never

9%
36.1%
13.9%
40.2%

Do you know any measures to counter stress?
122 responses

- ● Yes, I know several
- ● I know one or two
- ● No, I don't

39.3%
34.4%
26.2%

On a scale of 1 to 5, how stressed are you on a daily basis
122 responses

3 (2.5%)　24 (19.7%)　11 (9%)　49 (40.2%)　35 (28.7%)

3.2   Survey results

It was found that:

6

- 86% of the respondents have 2 hours or less to complete their homework each day

- 76% of the respondents often procrastinate

- 68% of the respondents find themselves stressed on a daily basis

- Only 26% of the respondents know several ways to cope with stress
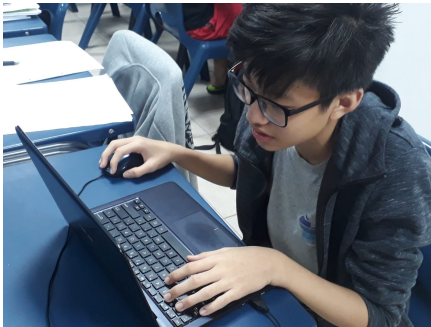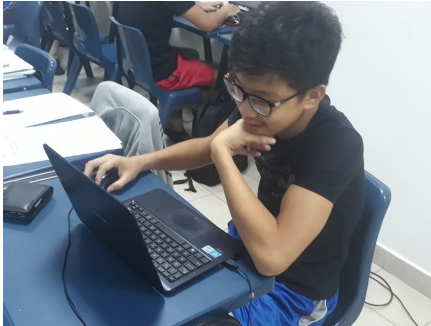
3.3   Development of resources

Research was carried out on various relevant websites on the causes, effects, coping techniques as well as how to prevent stress. The information was then collated and put onto a website, 3 video animations as well as certain parts of a Choose-Your-Own-Adventure style book. For the website, new information was being uploaded into the blog everyday and quotes were also being put up in the portfolio. For the video animations, they were uploaded into youtube as well as the website for easier accessibility. Finally, for the Choose-Your-Own-Adventure style book, it was made into an e-book which was also uploaded into the website for greater accessibility.

3.4   Pilot Test

A pilot test was carried out in order to gauge how useful the products were to the target audience as well as room for improvements. It had a sample size of 45 people, including one who formerly had depression.

- Many people were impressed with the e-book as they had never seen anything like that before. When asked to name 3 new things they have learned about stress, all of them were able to provide a valid answer.

- Some people have felt that the e-book lacks a "WOW" factor

- They also liked how the animations were funny to some extent to prevent them from getting bored.

4   OUTCOME & DISCUSSION

Our group acknowledged that it was in fact difficult to write an interesting book due to the lack of availability of stories that could closely relate to stress as most CYOA book are about zombie apocalypse, et cetera. Moreover, it was difficult to add custom pictures and further the story plot due to the lack of professional help. However, our group had decided to put in some measures to achieve the aim of engaging readers.

Since the pilot test had revealed that our book is not interesting enough, we decided to add the following additions in hope of surprising more readers with our book:

- achievement system

- points system

- "Did you know?" portions which are snippets of information that were useful and interesting to keep readers engaged.

- Easter Eggs

5   CONCLUSION

After 8 months, the project's original aim had been met, which was to assist the secondary school students in countering stress. It has been a challenging yet fun journey doing this project as there was a need to be unique compared to other projects as there were many projects who also attempted in countering stress. When thinking of the storyline of the interactive booklet, many difficulties were also faced such as creativity and attractiveness as these were the crucial elements that make our book engaging and captivating the readers' interest. Being humble and willing to accept criticisms also contributed a lot to our project as the products could be improved and modified such that it suits our target audience. Last but not least, the cooperation within the group was also extremely vital in the completion of this project.

6   ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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needs analysis and pilot test.

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