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Introduction

In our group work, the idea was to design an AI (Artificial Intelligence) and VR (Virtual Reality) incorporated educational system for students. This work was developed to enrich the learning process of students in Qatar and offer a more engaging learning environment. However, as is often the case with extensive and multiple-people work, some difficulties were expected. Two key areas posed significant challenges: the implementation of sustainability in our business strategy and dealing with the multiple views of the team members. These challenges will be discussed in this reflection together with how they were solved, what was learned, and how these experiences influence my future practice and career plans.

Experience 1: Integrating Sustainability into the Business Model

Nature of the Challenge:

Embedding sustainability considerations into the business model was a challenging and complex process (Gregori, 2020). It was already clear to us that sustainability has become a major issue in business, including education, yet we did not know how to practically address this issue. The challenge was in striking the right chords between the tactical and operational desire of having a functional and technologically superior platform. The strategic and operational necessity of having a platform that could run in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner was also difficult to fulfil. Furthermore, integrating our project into Qatar's Vision 2030, which focuses on sustainable development, brought extra layers of challenges apart from current educational needs, we had to consider how our platform would help Qatar achieve its long-term sustainability goals.

The teams also experienced difficulty in determining what sustainability was for the particular project. When it comes to sustainability in an educational technology platform, it may

refer to anything from reducing the environmental footprint by implementing efficient technologies to the financial sustainability of the business model where it could be sustained on its own without requiring a constant infusion of more funds from outside (Godina, 2020). Also, we had to address the issue of social sustainability, which means that our platform should be useful and open to any student regardless of their social status. These considerations are significant and numerous, which made it hard to consider some clear and specific strategies at the beginning of the project and to avoid confusion and doubt in our actions.

Addressing the Challenge:

At first, the method of achieving sustainability was generic and unstrategic. We knew that sustainability was something we had to work on but we did not know how we could incorporate this into our business model. To address this, we decided to break down sustainability into three key areas: environmental sustainability, financial sustainability, and social sustainability respectively.

- **Environmental Sustainability:** We investigated how our organization could reduce the carbon footprint of the platform by selecting energy-efficient data centers and considering carbon offset plans. But we soon came to the understanding that despite such efforts being laudable, they were not sufficient to cause change. We required a more comprehensive strategy that should also incorporate the creation of awareness of sustainable practices among the students and teachers who were going to use the platform.
- **Financial Sustainability:** We came up with a pricing structure that was cheap to schools while at the same time ensuring that there was a constant stream of income to cater for the maintenance and updates of the platform. This included entering into a long-term

agreement with the Ministry of Education which offered a constant stream of income and enabled us to look at future growths and additions.

- **Social Sustainability:** We ensured that the platform has been created in such a way that all students inclusive of the less privileged ones should be able to access it. This required the incorporation of features that meet all learning abilities and making the platform multi-language to suit the nature of the population in Qatar.

Impact on the Business Venture:

Sustainability integration into our business model was a success, and it changed the outlook of the whole venture (Wadin, 2019). It not only supported the proposal to the Ministry of Education by integrating it with Qatar's national goals but also guaranteed that the platform would be useful in the future. With a broad approach to sustainability, we were able to gain the funding and support that would make the project credible and plausible.

Approach in the Future:

In a similar case, I would ensure that I follow a more organized approach from the beginning. This would require the engagement of a sustainability assessment from where one could determine the challenges and opportunities that may be faced at the start of the project (Caeiro, 2020). Furthermore, I would consult sustainability professionals at the beginning of the process to get their input and to guarantee that all the measures are both wide-ranging and practicable.

Reflections and Action Points:

The experience was eye-opening especially when it came to issues with sustainability in business strategy. It helped to strengthen the opinion that sustainability cannot be an add-on or an

extra but it has to be integrated into the business model (Schneider, 2020). In the future, I will seek to expand my awareness of sustainable business practices and think about how they could be applied to any project I am involved in. In future projects, I will also ensure that sustainability is a priority that must be integrated into a project from the beginning of its implementation.

Experience 2: Managing Diverse Perspectives within the Team

Nature of the Challenge:

Another significant problem was dealing with multiple viewpoints in the team. Our group had different people with different backgrounds, experiences, knowledge, and personalities, which resulted in numerous opinions and suggestions. Although this was an advantage that the project was receiving a variety of perspectives from different individuals, there was also a downside in that it was very challenging to try and direct everyone towards the same goal. Some conflicts were more apparent in the case of the platform's design and functionality; some members wanted to introduce elements related to their fields of interest. These conflicts at times caused tension within the group and led to time wastage as much decision-making was being slowed down (Usendok, 2022).

The diversity within the team also triggered issues of communication and cooperation within the team. Members worked in a team, but they were different in terms of working attitude and problem-solving strategies, which caused conflicts and employees' tension. For instance, some members are more inclined to creativity and risk-taking strategies while others are inclined to realism (Graciano, 2023). This conflict of interest hampered the ability of the members of the committee to agree on fundamental issues because each of them was very passionate about their

stand. The problem was not only in the elimination of such discrepancies but while preserving unity and team spirit.

Addressing the Challenge:

To address this challenge, we implemented several strategies:

- **Open Communication:** One of the strategies that were implemented was free and open communication to allow the members of the team to freely express themselves (Lochner, 2020). It also proved useful in identifying problems at a tender stage and solving them before they developed into serious complications.
- **Role Clarification:** The division of work was done in a manner that each team member was assigned a particular task depending on his/her specialty thus minimizing duplication of work. For instance, the CTO was responsible for the technicalities of the platform while the CFO was in charge of the financial aspects (Lohmüller, 2019). However, this approach also made some of the members of the team feel like they were only useful in the roles assigned to them hence making some of them frustrated.
- **Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:** We created a conflict-solving technique, where any issue arising was brought to a team meeting and solved as a group. This made it possible for all the members to be involved in decision making although it also resulted in some of the decisions made which some of the members were not fully happy with but were willing to go along with.

Impact on the Business Venture:

The ability to manage multiple viewpoints helped to use the potential of every team member to the maximum, making the platform more comprehensive and powerful (Larson, 2020).

However, the process was not without several disadvantages. Some of the conflicts that arose in the process of implementing the project may have taken a lot of time to be resolved hence affecting the timeline of the project. Despite these delays, the final result provided a range of input sources, which allowed for a better, more effective platform.

Approach in the Future:

In the future, I would manage the team differently by having a more structured way of coming to decisions. This could include laying down time horizons for decisions and defining parameters for assessing the various choices. Also, I would prefer to organize team-building sessions at the beginning of the project to avoid issues and misunderstandings between the team members.

Reflections and Action Points:

This experience made me realize the significance of good management of the project team to realize the goals of the project. It continued to show that although diversity in teams can result in superior performance, it must be properly addressed so that the differences can be useful (Gomez, 2019). In my future career, I would like to enhance my leadership skills, especially in conflict and team management. I will also endeavor to ensure that the environment I am working in embraces diversity hence people's different ideas are encouraged and implemented.

Conclusion

Looking back at the difficulties encountered during the implementation of the EduVision project, it can be said that sustainability and team management are important factors that have to be considered when it comes to the effective delivery of a project. Besides, mainstreaming

sustainability into our project not only suited the goals of Qatar's Vision 2030 but also made our project sustainable. On the other hand, the conflict of opinion within the team despite being a weakness enhanced the final work. These experiences have given me lessons that I will take with me in my next career where I would like to work on projects that have innovation with sustainability and good teamwork.

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